

BURNING BUSH,

BLOODY DOORPOSTS,

PARTED SEA, BREAD FROM HEAVEN,

AND YOUR NEW LIFE



A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF

EXODUS

BURNING BUSH, BLOODY DOORPOSTS, PARTED SEA, BREAD FROM HEAVEN, AND YOUR NEW LIFE



The book of Exodus has captured imaginations for centuries, but what does it have to do with us today? This epic story of captivity, miracles, and rescue is your story. Join us as we journey through the book of Exodus and see how it points to Jesus, our ultimate Redeemer and Savior.

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FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

A burning bush. A sea split in two. Manna from Heaven. Commandments written on stone tablets by God Himself. The book of Exodus is filled with powerful moments that reveal God's character and commitment to His people.

Exodus is more than just a dramatic rescue story—it's our story. It shows us who God is—our Deliverer and Provider. It reminds us that He hears the cries of His people and moves toward us with compassion and faithful love. Through this teaching series, we'll discover how the story of Exodus points us to Jesus, our ultimate Redeemer and Savior. The One brings us out of captivity and walks closely with us now.

This beautiful series magazine, created by our talented Creative Arts volunteer team, is designed to help you engage with the Scripture. It's filled with inspiring stories, photography, and artwork as well as additional teaching content from pastors and scholars in our church. Use it to take notes during the weekend messages, reflect on what God is showing you, and dive deeper in community through your Life Group. I encourage you to bring it with you each week and use it as a tool to grow in your faith.

I'm so excited to walk through this powerful book with you. My prayer is that over these next six weeks, you'll experience the nearness of God, the beauty of His Word, and the freedom that comes from trusting Him fully.

In Christ,

Eric Geiger Senior Pastor

Erc Ger

7

Volunteer Contributors











Darlene Welling





FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

The book of Exodus is an epic journey that reveals God's powerful rescue of His people from captivity in Egypt. It reminds us of God's promises and His goodness as He leads the Israelites to freedom and chooses to dwell among them.

But Exodus is not just a historical account—it's a living story that points us to God's enduring love for us today. Through Jesus, who sacrificed Himself for our freedom, God has brought us out of captivity and now lives within us.

Our prayer is that as you spend time in the book of Exodus, your heart will be stirred through these creative reflections from our team of volunteers. May you experience God's love and mercy more deeply, and may your faith grow stronger as you journey through this series.

With thanks and gratitude,
The Mariners Creative Arts Editorial Team

How to Use This Series Magazine

This series magazine was created for you. It's filled with resources, original artwork, stories, and creative written pieces to enhance your own personal study of Exodus. It's a resource meant to travel. Bring it with you to weekend services to take notes and follow along with messages. Take it to your Life Group gathering to go deeper into God's Word with others. Use it in your own time with the Lord as you process the wisdom and teaching of each message and passage of Scripture. We pray it inspires and encourages you in your own walk with the Lord every day.

HERE IS A BREAKDOWN OF THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS TO GUIDE YOU:

SERMON NOTES

Each week there is space for you to take notes for the weekend message. It's a great way for you to follow along each week of the series and record how God is speaking to you through His Word.

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

These lessons are meant to be explored in the context of a Life Group. In Life Groups, we grow in our faith together and experience life as God intended—in community. We encourage you to join a Life Group and dive into each message with others during the week. Visit marinerschurch.org/joinagroup to learn more.

DEEPER STUDY

Each week, you will find articles and short Christ Connections for further study. These teaching resources are designed to help you go deeper into Exodus and see how everything in it points to Jesus. We encourage you to read them each week after messages to grow in your understanding and love for God's Word.

CREATIVE ELEMENTS

At the end of each week's content, you'll find creative pieces, including original artwork, photography, personal stories, and creative writing, contributed by our amazing Creative Arts Volunteer Team. Each piece is inspired by the book of Exodus and its themes.



JOIN A GROUP Scan the QR code to learn more about ways you can grow in your faith with others!

introduction to

The title "Exodus" is an anglicized version of a Greek word that means "departure" in recognition of one of the book's major events—the departure of God's people from Egypt.

Exodus could be considered the central book in the Old Testament because it records God's act of saving the Israelites and establishing them as a covenant community, a nation chosen to serve and represent him. Exodus describes the enslavement and oppression of the Israelites; the preparation and call of Moses; the conflict between Yahweh the God of Israel and the gods of Egypt (represented by Pharaoh); the exodus of the Israelites; their establishment as a nation in covenant with the Lord; their rebellion; and the Lord's provision for their ongoing relationship, symbolized by his presence at the tabernacle they built for him.



CIRCUMSTANCES OF WRITING

Author: The book of Exodus does not state who its author was. It does refer to occasions when Moses made a written record of events that took place and what God had said (17:14; 24:4,7; 34:27-28). The book also contains references to preserving and passing on information. Along with the other four books of the Pentateuch, it has long been considered to be primarily the work of Moses. Moses could have written Exodus at any time during a forty-year time span: after the Israelites finished constructing and dedicating the tabernacle at Mount Sinai, at the start of their second year after leaving Egypt (1445 BC), and before his death in the land of Moab (about 1406 BC).

Background: Exodus picks up where the Genesis narrative ended with the death of Joseph around 1805 BC. It quickly moves us forward almost three hundred years to a time in Egypt when the circumstances of Jacob's descendants had changed. The Israelites were serving as slaves during Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty, probably under the pharaohs Thutmose and Amenhotep II. The Hebrew slaves experienced a miraculous deliverance by God's hand through his servant-leader Moses. The Israelite slavery ended in 1446 BC. The book of Exodus records the events surrounding the exodus from Egypt and the Israelites' first year in the wilderness, including the giving of the law.

The date of the exodus is disputed, but biblical evidence favors 1446 BC. First Kings 6:1 states that the exodus occurred 480 years before Solomon's fourth year as king, established by biblical data combined with Assyrian chronology to

be 966 BC. In Judges 11:26, Jephthah said that Israel had been living in regions of Palestine for three hundred years. Jephthah lived around 1100 BC, thus dating the end of the wilderness journey to around 1400 BC.

MESSAGE AND PURPOSE

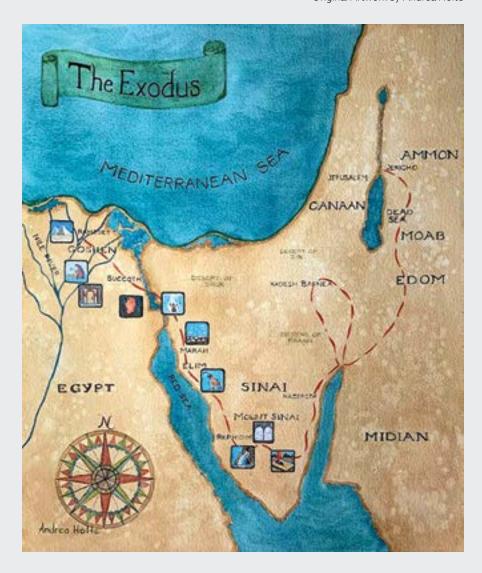
The book of Exodus shows God at work with the goal of having such close fellowship with people that he is described as dwelling among them. He rescued the Israelites in order to make himself known, not only by the exercise of his power but also through an ongoing covenant relationship based on his capacity for patience, grace, and forgiveness. The record of what the Lord did for the Israelites provided grounds for them to recognize him as their God who deserved their complete loyalty and obedience. This record would make clear to the Israelites their identity as God's people and would continue the display of his glorious identity.

Exodus conveys four strong messages:

- 1. *The Lord God:* God revealed himself to Moses and Israel as Yahweh, "I Am Who I Am." This covenant name for God carries profound meaning and affirms the power, authority, and eternal nature of God.
- 2. Redemption: The Israelites prayed for deliverance and God responded. God worked through his servant-leader Moses, but he did it in such a miraculous way that it was obvious that God was at work. The Israelites could not save themselves; rescue was all the work of God. The Passover was established to serve as an annual reminder of God's work on their behalf.
- 3. Law: The law of God is encapsulated in the Ten Commandments, God's absolutes for spiritual and moral living. The law is divided into two sections: the civil law—the rules that govern life in the community—and the ceremonial law—the patterns for worship and building the tabernacle.
- 4. Tabernacle: God gave specific instructions on how the tabernacle was to be built, but its significance is in what it represented—God dwelling among his people. He was specifically understood to dwell in the holy of holies, inaccessible to the average Israelite. The tabernacle points ahead to the moment when Christ removed the veil of separation, giving all believers access to God. In the New Testament (NT), believers become the tabernacle, for God doesn't just dwell among his people; he dwells in them.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BIBLE

Exodus provides the high point of redemptive history in the Old Testament (OT). Many patterns and concepts from Exodus receive attention, further development, and fulfillment elsewhere in Scripture, especially in the past, present, and future work of the Lord Jesus. These include rescue from oppression, provision of sustenance, God's faithfulness to his promises, the self-revelation of God, knowledge of God resulting from his actions, the presence of God, his glory, efforts required to preserve the knowledge of God, a new identity for people that is based on God's actions,



provision for worship, provision for life in community, connection between the reputation of God and his relationship with a group of people, obedience and rebellion, intercession, and gracious forgiveness.

STRUCTURE

Exodus is considered a part of the Law, but it is more historical narrative than law. The book is structured around the life and travels of Moses. Sandwiched between the narratives of chapters 1–18 and 32–40 are the establishment of the covenant (chaps. 19–24) and the laws related to the tabernacle and priesthood.

week one

EXODUS 1:8-13, 2:23-25, 3:1-15

CAPTIVITY AND I AM

EXODUS 1:8-13

⁸ A new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. ⁹ He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and powerful than we are. ¹⁰ Come, let's deal shrewdly with them; otherwise they will multiply further, and when war breaks out, they will join our enemies, fight against us, and leave the country." ¹¹ So the Egyptians assigned taskmasters over the Israelites to oppress them with forced labor. They built Pithom and Rameses as supply cities for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³ They worked the Israelites ruthlessly...

EXODUS 2:23-25

²³ After a long time, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned because of their difficult labor, they cried out, and their cry for help because of the difficult labor ascended to God. ²⁴God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵God saw the Israelites, and God knew.

EXODUS 3:1-15

MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH

¹Meanwhile, Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²Then the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire within a bush. As Moses looked, he saw that the bush was on fire but was not consumed. ³So Moses thought, "I must go over and look at this remarkable sight. Why isn't the bush burning up?"

⁴When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses, Moses!"

"Here I am," he answered.

⁵ "Do not come closer," he said. "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ Then he continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people in Egypt, and have heard them crying out because of their oppressors. I know about their sufferings, ⁸ and I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring them from that land to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the territory of the Canaanites, Hethites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. ⁹So because the Israelites' cry for help has come to me, and I have also seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them, ¹⁰ therefore, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you may lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

¹¹ But Moses asked God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

¹²He answered, "I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I am the one who sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain."

¹³ Then Moses asked God, "If I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what should I tell them?"

¹⁴God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you." ¹⁵God also said to Moses, "Say this to the Israelites: The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered in every generation."

Sermon Notes	

Sermon Notes

Life Group Discussion Guide

LEAN IN

Did you ever get lost as a kid? Did you call out for Mom or Dad? Share about a time you or a loved one got lost.

LOOK DOWN

Read Exodus 1:8-13 (pg. 20)

What changed about the Israelites' lives in Egypt when the new king started to reign?

Read Exodus 2:23-25 (pg. 20)

What happened when the Israelites called out to God?

Read Exodus 3:14-15 (pg. 21)

What do we learn about the person of God in these verses?

LOOK OUT

In the early parts of Exodus, we see God's people being oppressed and persecuted. Are God's people still oppressed and persecuted today? How? Where?
How do we see God respond to His people when they are oppressed?
LOOK IN
What do we learn about God in His response to the Israelites that may be comforting to us?
In what ways have you seen God work in difficult times in your life?

RHYTHM REMINDER 0 Serve the Community

THE "I AM" STATEMENTS OF JESUS

By Christine Caine, Teaching Pastor

In the book of Exodus, God reveals Himself with the powerful declaration, "I AM," which signifies His eternal and unchanging nature. In the Gospel of John, we see Jesus echoing this divine truth through His seven "I AM" statements. Each declaration connects our deepest spiritual needs with the very essence of God's character. These statements invite us to recognize that in every circumstance we face, Jesus is not just a distant figure; He is intimately involved in our journey. As we embrace these powerful truths, we are reminded that no matter what season we find ourselves in, the promise of "I AM" remains steadfast with us, providing strength, comfort, and direction.

1. I Am the Bread of Life (John 6:35)

When Jesus declares, "I am the bread of life," He invites us to recognize that our deepest hunger can only be satisfied in Him. In a world filled with distractions and temporary pleasures, we often try to fill our emptiness with things that ultimately leave us wanting. Jesus challenges us to approach Him as our sustainer and source of nourishment. In His presence, we find the strength to persevere and the sustenance we need to thrive.

2. I Am the Light of the World (John 8:12)

In a time when darkness can feel overwhelming, Jesus proclaims, "I am the light of the world." He illuminates our path and dispels the shadows of fear and confusion. When we walk in His light, we gain clarity and understanding. He brings hope, reveals truth, and guides us toward the abundant life He promises.

3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)

We don't need to climb our way into God's presence—Jesus has flung the door wide open. Jesus is our access to abundant life. He is the entry point to salvation, security, and freedom. We are bombarded with endless choices and options in our world, and people feel overwhelmed, anxious, and hopeless. I'm so grateful God gave us one door to eternal life, and His name is Jesus.

4. I Am the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)

In declaring, "I am the good shepherd," Jesus reveals His heart for us as His sheep. He cares for us, guides us, and protects us from harm. His love is sacrificial; He laid down His life for us. As we recognize His role as our shepherd, we can trust Him to lead us through life's valleys and mountaintops. If you feel lost or vulnerable today, remember that you are never alone. The Good Shepherd walks with you, quiding you with His wisdom and love.

5. I Am the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)

When Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life," He speaks to the ultimate hope we have in Him. Even in the face of death, we are offered eternal life. This promise is not just for the future but for our present circumstances. Jesus has the power to resurrect our dreams, restore our brokenness, and bring life to the dead areas of our hearts. I have discovered that impossible is often where God starts, and miracles are what He does. He specializes in bringing life where there seems to be none.



6. I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)

In a world filled with opinions and conflicting ideologies, Jesus boldly claims, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is our guide, the embodiment of truth, and the source of true life. When we align our lives with His teachings and follow His lead, we find purpose and direction. He is the way that leads to peace, the truth that sets you free, and the life that fills you with joy.

7. I Am the True Vine (John 15:1)

Finally, Jesus says, "I am the true vine." This statement emphasizes our need for connection with Him. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine, we cannot thrive without being rooted in Christ. Our relationship with Him is essential for our spiritual growth. Sometimes, when we feel disconnected or unproductive, it is because we need to reconnect with the true vine.

The seven "I Am" statements of Jesus are not just theological truths; they are personal invitations to experience the fullness of who He is. Through these statements, Jesus invites us to know Him deeply, follow Him fully, and trust Him completely. He is everything we need.

CHRIST CONNECTION

By Jake Mosher, Youth Director of Mariners North Irvine

Moses is perhaps the most monumental figure in the Old Testament, but even he was not enough. He was a wonder-worker, calling down judgment on Egypt and leading Israel to freedom, yet he could not free them from the reign of death (Exodus 14; Hebrews 3). He spoke with God face to face, but he could not bring others into that Holy Presence (Exodus 33:11). He delivered God's Law, but with this Law came the knowledge of sin—and through



sin, came death (Romans 7:10). Moses was mighty, but he was only a shadow of someone greater.

God promised that another prophet would come, like Moses, yet far greater (Deuteronomy 18:15). This one wouldn't just speak with God but be God among us. He wouldn't just lead Israel out of slavery, but rescue all people from sin and death. His covenant wouldn't bring condemnation,

but grace. And He would guide His people, not to a temporary land, but to eternal life with God.

This greater prophet is Jesus—our Greater Moses. He always surpasses our expectations. He always keeps His promises. And He always loves us. So we trust Him—completely, confidently, and forever.



STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

By Brandon Gross

Dick and Cookie are one of those couples that make you feel included, as though you have been friends for years after just 15 minutes of conversation. Like many of us, God intervened in their lives and challenged them to trust, submit, and follow His will. His call was answered, and now we have these amazing people serving their community in a humble and exciting way: helping launch a new Mariners Church congregation.

Q: Let's start by getting to know you. Who are Dick and Cookie?

A: We've been married 47 years and going strong. Given that we own a construction company and work together, having a good relationship has been key to success and happiness. COVID made business and life in general challenging for us. Jobs dried up, and while on a church trip in Israel it took an act of God to get back into the country and home safely. Pretty stressful time, but we were already considering retirement and ready to make the transition to focusing on other areas of our lives.

Q: How did you get involved with Mariners Church?

A (Dick): We were born and raised Catholic. Over the years, our kids had activities at local churches, and we became Christians. Each morning around 6:30a, I take a walk while listening to music and praying. In March of 2024, God spoke to me, revealing His plan for me to be involved in planting a new church. It was on my mind for a few weeks, and on a morning walk, He spoke to me once again with the same message. A few weeks later, we attended Marriage Matters—this was our third year attending and something we always enjoyed. Doug Fields ended up mentioning the new congregation Mariners was launching

in Anaheim. It was then I was convinced God had been calling me. The following morning, while at breakfast with our friends, I relayed the calling from God I had heard on my walks and what transpired the previous evening at Marriage Matters. They got goosebumps and encouraged us to pursue the opportunity. We began attending the Mariners Anaheim launch meetings, prayer groups, etc. I admitted to my son that this was the first time in life that I gave it all to God—not wanting to lead, but to follow and fulfill His will. From there we began attending Mariners Anaheim to satisfy our desire to help people and spread the Word of Jesus. It was an exciting change for us.

A (Cookie): It began to become clear just how involved Mariners is in the church body and community as a whole. From there we started getting involved with the Anaheim launch and Rooted. Seeing how this experience has taken root within Dick, it has touched my heart as well.

Q: As Anaheim kicks off, there must be a lot of thoughts and emotions running through your heads.

A (Dick): Given that we have additional obligations with church, we're easing into the launch of Mariners Anaheim. We led Rooted in the winter, and I'll be a part of the Prayer Team. Our city of Anaheim needed Mariners desperately—it's a melting pot of people that need to hear the good news of Jesus. It's exciting to be part of what God has in store for us.



A (Cookie): It's really exciting to see, since I'm a numbers person, the research that went into planting a church in Anaheim—there's definitely a need. It will be rewarding to see how God works here in an underserved area of Southern California.

Q: For people with stories and paths similar to yourselves, what would you say to them about Jesus and community? How would you encourage them?

A (Dick): Earlier in my life I wasn't as open to new experiences and being vulnerable. As I've gotten older, however, I realized that what we all need is need! It doesn't always necessarily make sense, it doesn't add up, but have faith and trust in God.

A (Cookie): Letting go and accepting unknown territory was a big part of it for us. We try not to be tied down to one thing, one place, one any of it anymore. We just go where God calls us one day at a time, in the areas that God calls us. I'm impressed with how Mariners evaluates situations and adjusts accordingly to meet the needs of everyone. Getting to know more about the church, like the Church Verse...it's the little things we find out along the journey that are exciting, impressive, and endearing, and we are happy to be a part of that.

Q: Why should someone visit Mariners Anaheim? What can they expect?

A (Dick): Give Mariners Anaheim a try for all of the things Mariners Church does. There is so much thought, effort, and resources that go into planting a church. We have to be open, everyone needs to be open, even though it's so hard to change perspective and habits. Take a chance! No expectations. It'll be a fun experience for all.

A (Cookie): Try it because Anaheim is new, everyone there is new. Nobody has been there for years and knows everyone. It's new and fun for everyone, and that's a glorious reality we can all partake in.

Moses' Rescue Original Artwork by Jiyea Kim





MOSES, A SERVANT OF CHRIST

By Monica Brislawn

There are many people in the Scriptures whose lives are an inspiration to us. My go-to guy has been Moses. Let me explain.

I was several years into a job at a "Big Four" accounting firm and was quite busy. During this time, I had been reminded of the Hebrews 11 faith chapter and was moved by Moses' example. The writer of Hebrews describes Moses' opinions and choices, showing his faith in God. He believed there was something greater than the riches of Egypt:

"For he considered reproach for the sake of Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, since he was looking ahead to the reward." Hebrews 11:26

John Piper writes about Moses in his book, *The Dangerous Duty of Delight*, describing Moses as a "hero of the church" because "he endured incredible hardship in the service of God's people when he could have had a lifetime of comforts in Egypt."

Moses chose to serve God's people, and this was more important than remaining in Egypt. Yes, Moses' life was inspiring, but I still had a job to do! I had wondered if it may be time to make a career change so I would have more time to pursue personal interests, yet work was always pressing. There was just so much of it. Moses, however, simply would not go away, and his example eventually became a matter of conscience. I flew back to the Midwest during this season for some business management training and there I had some time to slow down and reflect. It was there I estimated God just may be up to something. Yes, my cloud was moving! I could only laugh out loud with joy. God may be showing up and I had better get ready.



*I Am Who I Am*Original Artwork by Ammie Gomez



Let My People Go Original Artwork by David Harrington

Returning to California amid all the work duties, there really was only one focus. Time to clean! It took days. Organize the soft copy files, file away the hard copy ones. Turn in receipts for reimbursement, and bring the personal artifacts home. Finally, clearing out the office was done! If the Lord led me to another job, I would be a little more ready to leave this career. Yes, it was time to sit and wait and see if God would show up. During this time, in my corporate office, I shared with a colleague the life of Moses and his importance in the salvation story. I shared this Hebrews passage, yet didn't have much else to say—that is, how it practically mattered in my life, since I was simply waiting. I wasn't 100% positive God was going to do something, and even if He did, I didn't know what He was going to do.

Soon after I had cleaned out my office, I received a phone call. It was from a woman who was a spiritual leader in my church. The elders were making changes in the accounting department, and they needed help. Did I know of anyone who could help? While I could have found some names for her, I wondered if this was where God was leading me. We agreed to think about it, and she would call again. It felt so risky to leave the work I had known for so long.

God, in His goodness, had another way to give me a nudge. When I reflected on the call, I realized it came on October 12. Years earlier, on this very same day, I sat in a small group talking and sharing Scriptures. In our time together, I believe the Spirit of God may have said to me, "There is room in the ministry for you." Subsequently, nothing happened, and I laid it aside. Yet fast forward to this very same day years later: an invitation was extended to me. Could it be God's thumbprint on these events, giving me the courage to believe this was Him? In faith, I stepped out to serve the church.

Not all have appreciated my decision to serve Christ. It has been hard but great serving the family of God. Yes, I have experienced reproach for the sake of Christ, though certainly not like Moses or many believers suffering around the world. It can be saddening when people do not understand or agree with your choices, especially when you want to please everyone. In the midst of the reproach, we can agree following Jesus and serving His Kingdom is what matters most.

week two

EXODUS 3:19-22, 12:29-42

PLAGUES AND PASSOVER

EXODUS 3:19-22

¹⁹ "However, I know that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go, even under force from a strong hand. ²⁰ But when I stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my miracles that I will perform in it, after that, he will let you go. ²¹ And I will give these people such favor with the Egyptians that when you go, you will not go empty-handed. ²² Each woman will ask her neighbor and any woman staying in her house for silver and gold jewelry, and clothing, and you will put them on your sons and daughters. So you will plunder the Egyptians."

EXODUS 12:29-42

THE EXODUS

²⁹Now at midnight the LORD struck every firstborn male in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the prisoner who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn of the livestock. ³⁰During the night Pharaoh got up, he along with all his officials and all the Egyptians, and there was a loud wailing throughout Egypt because there wasn't a house without someone dead. ³¹He summoned Moses and Aaron during the night and said, "Get out immediately from among my people, both you and the Israelites, and go, worship the LORD as you have said. ³²Take even your flocks and your herds as you asked and leave, and also bless me."

³³ Now the Egyptians pressured the people in order to send them quickly out of the country, for they said, "We're all going to die!" ³⁴ So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls wrapped up in their clothes on their shoulders.

³⁵ The Israelites acted on Moses's word and asked the Egyptians for silver and gold items and for clothing. ³⁶ And the LORD gave the people such favor with the Egyptians that they gave them what they requested. In this way they plundered the Egyptians.

³⁷ The Israelites traveled from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand able-bodied men on foot, besides their families. ³⁸ A mixed crowd also went up with them, along with a huge number of livestock, both flocks and herds. ³⁹ The people baked the dough they had brought out of Egypt into unleavened loaves, since it had no yeast; for when they were driven out of Egypt, they could not delay and had not prepared provisions for themselves.

⁴⁰ The time that the Israelites lived in Egypt was 430 years. ⁴¹ At the end of 430 years, on that same day, all the LORD's military divisions went out from the land of Egypt. ⁴² It was a night of vigil in honor of the LORD, because he would bring them out of the land of Egypt. This same night is in honor of the LORD, a night vigil for all the Israelites throughout their generations.

Sermon	Notes
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Sermon Notes	

Sermon Notes

LEAN IN

Life Group Discussion Guide

What is one of your favorite trips you've ever taken? What made it so great? LOOK DOWN Read Exodus 3:19-22 (pg. 40) What does God say will happen when the Israelites try to ask Pharaoh to let them leave Egypt? Read Exodus 12:29-36 (pg. 40) What happens in this passage? How does it fulfill the verses we read in Exodus 3?

LOOK OUT

ESSK CS1
The plagues in Exodus are meant to demonstrate how the God of the Bible is more powerful than each of the gods worshiped in
Egypt. What are some common "gods" that we worship today?
Why are the gods of money, power, or beauty more tempting to worship than the God of the Bible?
worship than the God of the bible?
LOOK IN
In what ways has God delivered you from your own idolatry?
Cod has rescued us from our sin like He rescued the levelites
God has rescued us from our sin like He rescued the Israelites from Egypt. How does this affect how we live in our everyday lives?

RHYTHM REMINDER



COMMUNION FAQ

By Steve Bang Lee, Lead Pastor of Mariners North Irvine

"What is communion?"

Communion, also known as the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper, is a sacrament instituted by Jesus for His people for the remembrance and commemoration of His sacrificial work on the cross, which accomplished the forgiveness of sin and made it possible for us to receive eternal life with God.

"Why should communion matter to us?"

In the book of Exodus, the Passover meal (Exodus 12) was eaten by God's people within homes with doorposts painted and dripping with the blood of lambs, as commanded by God. This act signified their deliverance from slavery in Egypt, as the Lord passed over homes covered by the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12:7,12-13). This meal of Passover was commanded by God to be observed continually, once a year, as a perpetual reminder of God's redeeming power (Exodus 12:24-27).

Remarkably, centuries later, on the evening of Passover, Jesus revealed Himself to be the true Passover Lamb who "takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). By offering His life, Jesus initiated a new exodus—freedom from the tyranny and oppression of sin and death. Communion invites us to remember and celebrate the great spiritual redemption that belongs to those who have trusted in Jesus.

"What's the benefit of taking communion?"

Human beings have a memory problem. Research studies have shown the unreliability of human memory (this exact study is not remembered). This is certainly true of followers of Jesus, whom Jesus lovingly called "sheep." Too often, those once saved by His grace can default towards performative earning. Those gloriously covered in Christ's righteousness forget and scramble to put on our

fig leaves of success, approval, and comfort for self-covering. The benefit of communion is that we remember the God who loves us and the grace we have in Jesus. We're grateful Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

"What is the significance of the bread and juice?"

The bread and juice point us to the saving work of Jesus, with the bread representing His body given for us and the juice, His blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Throughout history, the Church has been united in agreement that the practice of communion is a sacred remembrance of Christ's sacrifice. When we take communion, we faithfully "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

"How should Christians take communion?"

Followers of Jesus take communion with the posture of humility, reverence, and faith in the context of other followers of Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). We take communion as those grateful for Christ's work, honest about our sins and shortcomings, trusting in His finished work, and rejoicing in His amazing love. Communion is not for the perfect, but for those clinging to Christ's work on the cross and in so doing, avoiding taking communion in "an unworthy manner" (1 Corinthians 11:27).

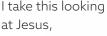
"What if I don't feel worthy to take communion?"

You may be closer to being at the right place than you think. Communion is for those who know they're unworthy because that's the message we've received from the Scriptures: none of us are worthy. None of us are good enough to save ourselves from our sins. We have all fallen short.

Jesus is our only hope, our perfect righteousness, who makes us able to stand before God as His treasured sons and daughters. The next time you're about to take communion and feel unworthy, look to His finished work and preach to your soul: "The work of Jesus is worthy.

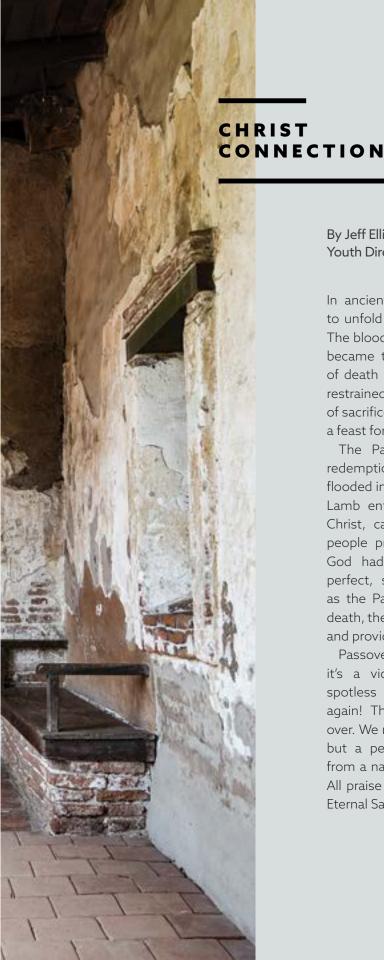
I trust in His work, not my shortcomings. His work overcomes my work and lack of work.

I take this looking



not myself."





By Jeff Ellison, Youth Director of Mariners Oceanside

In ancient Egypt, a divine promise began to unfold as darkness swept over the land. The blood of a lamb, brushed on doorposts, became the mark of mercy. As the angel of death passed over, God's judgment was restrained. The first Passover was a symbol of sacrifice and deliverance. This day marked a feast for generations to come.

The Passover foreshadowed a greater redemption. Centuries later, as people flooded into Jerusalem to celebrate, another Lamb entered the city. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, came in on a mission. While the people prepared their lambs for sacrifice, God had prepared His own. Jesus was perfect, spotless, sinless, and pure. Just as the Passover lamb shielded Israel from death, the Perfect Lamb saved us from death and provided eternal life.

Passover is not just a reminder of Egypt—it's a victory celebration of Jesus. Our spotless Lamb came, was slain, and rose again! Through Christ, death has passed over. We no longer just remember an event, but a person. It's more than deliverance from a nation; it's deliverance for our souls. All praise to our Passover Lamb, Jesus, the Eternal Sacrifice, once for all.











Passover's Light
Original Artwork by

Tyler Maynard

GOD'S PRESENCE WITHIN ME

By Darlene Welling

My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? No, no, no! You have not! I am Your child. I am Your temple. You said that You will never leave me nor forsake me.

God...Your presence, at times, to me feels...

Quiet, like a void in an empty room.

Quiet, like the relaxing calm before dawn.

Distant, like a faraway country.

Distant, like creating a space for gazing at restful waters for reflection.

Stirring, like the warning red lights at a train crossing.

Stirring, like the rain awakening flowers, yet gently.

Peaceful, like shortcomings wrapped and sealed in forgiveness.

Peaceful, like divinely inspired music that rests the spirit and renews the soul.

Loving, like the father receiving his prodigal son back home.

Loving, like the birth, life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

like a restored relationship, and eternal life with You, Father God.

However I may feel, whatever my emotions or circumstances may be, Your presence in my heart takes care of me. Unlike the uncertainty of time, You do not come and go.

My God, my God. You're ever present, for this, I truly know!



week three

EXODUS 13:17-22, 15:1-21



EXODUS 13:17-22

THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS

¹⁷When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them along the road to the land of the Philistines, even though it was nearby; for God said, "The people will change their minds and return to Egypt if they face war." 18 So he led the people around toward the Red Sea along the road of the wilderness. And the Israelites left the land of Egypt in battle formation.

¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, because Joseph had made the Israelites swear a solemn oath, saying, "God will certainly come to your aid; then you must take my bones with you from this place."

²⁰ They set out from Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. ²¹The LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to lead them on their way during the day and in a pillar of fire to give them light at night, so that they could travel day or night. ²² The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night never left its place in front of the people.

EXODUS 15:1-21

ISRAEL'S SONG

¹Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD. They said:

I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted; he has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea.

- The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.
- 3 The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name.
- 4 He threw Pharaoh's chariots and his army into the sea; the elite of his officers were drowned in the Red Sea.
- The floods covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone.

- 6 LORD, your right hand is glorious in power. LORD, your right hand shattered the enemy.
- 7 You overthrew your adversaries by your great majesty. You unleashed your burning wrath; it consumed them like stubble.
- The water heaped up at the blast from your nostrils; the currents stood firm like a dam. The watery depths congealed in the heart of the sea.
- The enemy said: "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil. My desire will be gratified at their expense. I will draw my sword; my hand will destroy them."
- But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters.
- 11 LORD, who is like you among the gods? Who is like you, glorious in holiness, revered with praises, performing wonders?
- 12 You stretched out your right hand, and the earth swallowed them.
- 13 With your faithful love, you will lead the people you have redeemed; you will guide them to your holy dwelling with your strength.
- 14 When the peoples hear, they will shudder; anguish will seize the inhabitants of Philistia.
- 15 Then the chiefs of Edom will be terrified: trembling will seize the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan will panic;

- 16 terror and dread will fall on them. They will be as still as a stone because of your powerful arm until your people pass by, LORD, until the people whom you purchased pass by.
- 17 You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your possession; LORD, you have prepared the place for your dwelling; Lord, your hands have established the sanctuary.
- 18 The LORD will reign forever and ever!

¹⁹ When Pharaoh's horses with his chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought the water of the sea back over them. But the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. ²⁰ Then the prophetess Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women came out following her with tambourines and dancing. ²¹ Miriam sang to them:

> Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted; he has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea.

Sermon Notes

Life Group Discussion Guide

LEAN IN

Have you ever changed your mind about a big decision? What made you change it? What was that like?_____

LOOK DOWN

Read Exodus 13:17-22 (pg. 56)

How does God provide for His people as He leads them out of captivity in Egypt?

Read Exodus 15:11-13 (pg. 57)

This is part of a song Moses sings to praise God. What do we learn about the character of God in these verses?

LOOK OUT

What makes it difficult to trust God when life is stressful or
seemingly out of our control?
What are some common ways we try to take matters into our
own hands when we experience hard times?
LOOK IN
In what ways has God provided for you in times of uncertainty
or trouble?
What attribute or character quality of God brings you the most
peace when you find yourself in a difficult season of life?
,

RHYTHM REMINDER













Worshi

GRATITUDE IS THE ANTIDOTE

By Munyoki Mulwa, Lead Pastor of Mariners Anaheim

"I don't want to." "No" "It's not fair." "Why? I want it."

These are daily phrases in our house right now. If you're a parent, you know the season—when conversations swing wildly between gratitude and complaining, silent acknowledgment and loud grumbling. It's funny how this stage seems almost universal across cultures—part of being human.

But the truth is, some of those same patterns of complaining don't disappear when we grow up.

- When your boss ignores your advice.
- When a friend takes advantage of your kindness.
- When the steak comes out wrong at the restaurant.
- When the wrong person wins an election.
- When gas prices jump again.
- When God doesn't answer a prayer the way you hoped.

I've been there. Way too often. We slip so easily between thankfulness and grumbling-just like kids do. And while we know we shouldn't stay in that place, grumbling often wins out. Unsurprising, really—it's part of our brokenness.

It's nothing new. You can see it clearly in the Israelites. They left Egypt in triumph, carrying livestock, treasure, freedom, and the visible protection of God. They walked through the Red Sea with walls of water on either side. They were headed for a land flowing with milk and honey, with God Himself leading the way.



Yet still...they grumbled. They built idols, fell back into old patterns, complained about food, complained about water—even after everything they'd been given.

The real problem wasn't their hunger. It was their heart. Gratitude forces you to look back and remember God's faithfulness as proof that His promises can be trusted. Over and over, God reminded them, "Look what I've already done!" but they fixated on what they didn't have instead.

What about you?
Do you find yourself stuck in grumbling?
Discouraged, sour, slow to see what God has already done?

Gratitude is the antidote to the unsettled heart. No wonder God urges us to "give thanks in everything..." (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Gratitude lifts your eyes back to the bigness and faithfulness of God—and points your heart forward toward the promises still to come.



CHRIST CONNECTION

By Eliot Moon, Junior High Director

The Prince of Egypt is a timeless film that paints the picture of the famous scene where the Israelites crossed through the Red Sea. God saved His people yet again from their enemies through a path in the waters as Pharaoh's forces drowned and were finally defeated.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 establishes a connection between the Red Sea crossing and baptism. The apostle Paul writes, "Now I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Just as the Egyptians drowned and faced God's wrath, Jesus took our place on the cross. He faced the depths of judgment for our sins and defeated the enemy. And just as the Israelites were saved from God's judgment because of His love, we too remember the salvation we receive through the Sacrificial Lamb.

Praise be to God for reminding us that every time we witness a baptism of a fellow believer, we celebrate more than a soul confessing Jesus as Savior and Lord. We celebrate a child of God saved from the waters of death and destruction and safely brought to new life in Christ!





ABUNDANCE IN ABIDING

By Jenn McBride

"I want the hotel!" our four-year-old son demanded on loop while emphatically digging his heels into the dirt. I'm sure the throngs of hikers enjoying a rare 85-degree summer day in one of the Canadian Rockies' most picturesque canyons could have done without echoes of his cries for the Marriott. Same, nature enthusiasts, same. From a rushing turquoise river and cascading waterfalls to majestic trees lining the path ahead of us, Maverick was dismissing God's otherworldly creation on display. Just as the Israelites stubbornly long for a return to captivity in Exodus 14:12, my son would rather have made a U-turn straight back to the parking lot.

The Israelites' persistent complaints and spiritual immaturity in the face of adversity throughout Exodus are, in fact, resemblant of a petulant child. God rescues them from oppression, parts the Red Sea, and rains down manna from Heaven. Yet somehow, worshiping a man-made golden calf makes its way onto their Promised Land bingo card. If given the option, I'm sure my son would have similarly misplaced his affections. Perhaps by picking a new family that was preferably done with the aforementioned hike-and on its way back to the car.



■ Delivered Original Artwork by Martha Caputo

Find most of us at the tail end of a missed flight connection or a crawl up the 405 on a Friday afternoon, and our attitudes will sadly mirror Moses' flock-and under much less distress at that. However, if you're a believer, you likely haven't resorted to making a false deity from melted jewelry. This is arguably because we now serve as the very temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) these sojourners wouldn't live to see built by Solomon nearly 500 years later. We have a clear advantage in both Jesus' completed work on the cross and the Spirit now dwelling within us. When Jesus defeated the grave, the temple veil split in two, symbolizing our irrevocable access to Him. What a gift to know and experience the God who loves us madly without having to wait for Moses to climb up and down a mountaintop on our behalf! Yet the propensity to turn from the only One worth following remains. My favorite hymn laments, "Prone to wander Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love."

In Exodus 3:14, Yahweh-"I AM WHO I AM"-instructs Moses to tell the Israelites He is saving them from their misery and leading them to a land flowing with milk and honey. But they struggle to trust the God of their fathers and His all-sufficiency. We must constantly fight to fix our eyes and affections on Him as we walk through life, lest we lean on our own understanding







and elevate anything other than Him. As we read throughout Exodus, idolatry only leads to self-destruction, confusion, isolation, and even death. While salvation is guaranteed upon our acceptance of Christ, we stand to miss a life of abundance if we don't perpetually abide in Jesus.

When I visited Israel with Mariners in 2023, I had "Jesus" and the Hebrew form of "Yahweh" tattooed in tandem on my wrist. I knew I wanted to come home with a permanent expression of my faith, but I wasn't yet aware this would be the first thing I see when I lift my hands up in worship. And as I glance at it throughout the day, its immovability reminds me that nothing-

even my sin, doubts, and grumblings-can pluck me from His hand. I want nothing more than for my life, like my wrist, to be marked for Jesus. And while our son may never prefer hiking over a hotel, I pray he wholeheartedly seeks the Lord and clings to the assurance of our ultimate Promised Land: eternity with Christ.



■ Egypt and the Promised Land Original Artwork by Bill Lee



RED SEA **ROADS**

By Stephanie Miyoshi

"The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him."

Exodus 15:2

We have been set free. By the blood of the Lamb. By the Holy One of Israel. By the glorious I AM.

Freed wholly from the past. And the curse of these chains. Freed from the memories. And from all of our shame.

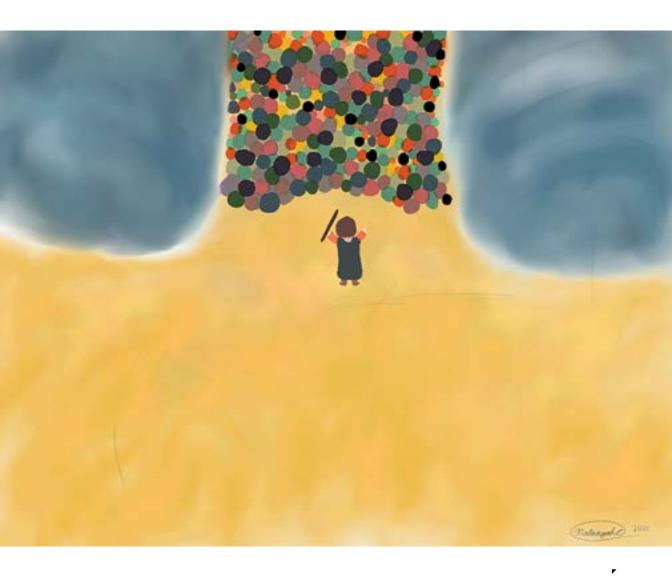
Called out of captivity. Walking towards the unknown. We are on a trail through the desert. Leading to a Red Sea road.

The road leads through valleys. And raging waters so deep. With our backs to the water. Who will we believe?

Will we stand still in fear? Or step out in faith? Will we head to the Promised Land? That God says awaits?

We're the children of promise. Who never walk alone. He is always beside us. On our Red Sea roads.

Where He leads, I will follow. I will go where He goes. I know I'll see His glory. On my Red Sea roads.



The Parting of the Red Sea Original Artwork by Natanyah Caputo

week four

EXODUS 15:22 - 16:5



EXODUS 15:22-16:5

WATER PROVIDED

²²Then Moses led Israel on from the Red Sea, and they went out to the Wilderness of Shur. They journeyed for three days in the wilderness without finding water. ²³ They came to Marah, but they could not drink the water at Marah because it was bitter-that is why it was named Marah. 24 The people grumbled to Moses, "What are we going to drink?" 25 So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he threw it into the water, the water became drinkable.

The LORD made a statute and ordinance for them at Marah, and he tested them there. ²⁶ He said, "If you will carefully obey the LORD your God, do what is right in his sight, pay attention to his commands, and keep all his statutes, I will not inflict any illnesses on you that I inflicted on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you."

²⁷Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy date palms, and they camped there by the water.

16 MANNA AND QUAIL PROVIDED

¹ The entire Israelite community departed from Elim and came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left the land of Egypt. ²The entire Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³ The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat and ate all the bread we wanted. Instead, you brought us into this wilderness to make this whole assembly die of hunger!"

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. This way I will test them to see whether or not they will follow my instructions. 5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days."

Sermon Notes

Life Group Discussion Guide

LEAN IN

If you could relive any time or season of your life, which would you choose? A part of your childhood? High school? Something else? Explain why you chose what you did.

LOOK DOWN

Read Exodus 16:2-3 (pg. 76)

What are the Israelites complaining about? What do they wish would have happened?

Following the Israelites' complaints, what does God say He will do for them in Exodus 16:4-5?

What are some of the most common complaints you hear people make about God?

-	
go underappreciated or unnoticed?	
What are some common ways that God provides for people that may	

LOOK IN

LOOK OUT

Think about your life before you trusted Christ or believed in God.
Are you sometimes tempted to go back to that life? Why or why not?
How has God provided for you in ways you never expected?

RHYTHM REMINDER







Repentance









DOES GOD TEST US TODAY?

By Joanne Jung, Associate Dean and Professor at Talbot School of Theology

Universal Studios has its parting of the Red Sea. DreamWorks has its *Prince of Egypt*. But neither will address the real story or the question, "Does God test us today?"

Let's start with a little backstory: Abraham was God's choice to father the nation of Israel. Well beyond child-bearing age, he and Sarah started the lineage of God's chosen people. To test Abraham's faithfulness to God, the LORD commanded him to sacrifice his only and beloved son, Isaac. Abraham's obedience was linked to being chosen by God. Fast forward 430 years, when the Israelites are in Egypt, and their population boom and prosperity drove the fearful Pharaoh to oppress them.

After over four centuries of slavery, God commissioned Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt. Here are a few events the Israelites experienced after 430 years of slavery:

- 1. They witnessed the 10 plagues, culminating in the death of every firstborn male throughout Egypt, human and livestock.
- 2. They obeyed the LORD's instruction to brush the blood of a sacrificed animal on the doorposts, which saved them as death passed over those who trusted God's words and power.
- 3. When pursued by the Egyptian troops, they crossed through the Red Sea on dry land.

As newly-freed slaves, the Israelites needed to learn for themselves God's character and how to follow and depend on Him alone. God wants to be known, and one way He reveals Himself is by testing His people (Exodus 15:25, Exodus 16:4).



Quail at Twilight Original Artwork by Marisha VanDyke Miller

The word "test" used in these verses is the same word used when the LORD tested Abraham. Because it is difficult to trust someone you do not know, those who follow God need to learn what He is like, His character, His desire for them, and His commitment to them. The obedience required to pass the test, diligently paying attention to God (Exodus 15:26), and following through with what He commands, grows one's knowledge of what God is like: His faithfulness, trustworthiness, power, and presence. The idea of testing is echoed in the New Testament as well. James 1:2-4, 12:

Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.

Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

James uses the Greek word dokimion, which means a positive test intended to strengthen one's persevering faith, that results in Christlike character. Because trials are tests that lead to this outcome, we can count it as all joy (James 1:2). God wants His people to know Him and to know Him more fully, so He tests us.

What if we fail one of His tests? Because tests are designed to strengthen Christ followers, "failing" a test directs us to lean into greater submission and dependence on God's Spirit for guidance and power. If it leads to sin, then that test was actually a temptation, ultimately from the enemy (James 4:7). Temptations are designed to entice people into sin. God never tempts us (James 1:13). It is our human self-centeredness that causes us to ignore God's ways and design, succumbing to rebellion, which is sin (James 1:14-15). And even there, God provides complete forgiveness.

Deepening your relationship with God entails learning more about Him and living out the truth of what you know. It has been said, "One does not know what a tea bag is worth until it is steeped in hot water." Tests are God-ordained lab practicums. Take a long pause to answer these two questions:

- 1. What is your quotient for extending forgiveness, being others-focused, kind, humble, loving, gentle, and patient?
- 2. How are you letting God's Spirit, God's direct agent for your transformation, have His way?

We can be confident in knowing that we are not alone in these trials. His Spirit works in our lives.

- Bearing witness with our own spirits that we are God's children (Romans 8:16)
- Helping us in our weakness (Romans 8:26)
- Interceding on our behalf (Romans 8:26-27)
- Strengthening believers (Ephesians 3:16)
- Leading us in the ways of God (Galatians 5:18; Romans 8:14)

God still tests Christ followers, and He avails His Spirit to give evidence that He lives and reigns in us. From God's perspective, He knows that when trusting and obedience have their way and relationships with Him and others are strengthened, it becomes well with our souls—and He gets the glory.

So, does God test us today? Thankfully, yes. So, look for His lab practicums and let Him have His way.



CHRIST CONNECTION

By Andrew Magallanes, Youth Director of Mariners Huntington Beach

There are always moments of life that feel nonsensical: pain we didn't ask for, loss we didn't prepare for, or seasons that feel like demotions. But Romans 8:28 assures us that nothing is wasted for those who love God. With all things, God, who sees the big picture, is causing even the bitter things to work together for good.

Jesus' story brings this truth to life. His pain on the cross may have appeared to be a defeat, but it was, in fact, the turning point of God's plan for the redemption of the world. What appeared to be an injustice on the cross was, in fact, the working out of God's justice and our justification. And through Jesus' death, life broke in-as He paid the price for our sin. What appeared to be an ending was, in fact, a new beginning. And in like manner, Jesus meets us in our pain and offers us the promise that nothing is wasted. We can trust that whether we get to see this healing and reconciliation in the here and now or later on in eternity, God is redeeming the hardest pages of our story and making something beautiful out of it. Because with Jesus, the bitter doesn't stay bitter—it becomes sweet.



STAGES OF EXODUS

By Wes Blake

PROLOGUE: FIGHT OR FLIGHT

Running away, running away, Crying out, "Please save my life!" Running away, running away, God, help me to survive and thrive

THE CAPTIVITY

I once lived in a cruel world Ruled by evil and shadows. Corrupt without soul, I was a slave to darkness, Trapped in captivity all my days, Until I found You.

Glimmering in the dark depths,
Somewhere in the midst of it all,
You gave me the hope that I needed
To finally break free from the chains
That have left me bound and restrained.
Once trapped in this unforgiving desert,
Where captivity seemed like forever,
And hope seemed lost in the night.



THE RESCUE

Back when my world was dark, I was lost in a dusty haze. Whipped and tormented by my captors, Slowly perishing in the heat of the desert, Every night I cried out to You, And then You finally came.

You rescued me from enslavement, And saved me with Your love. You gave me the strength I needed To break free from these shackles, No longer holding me down. You allowed me to finally escape From the pain I endured All these years.

THE ESCAPE

Escaping into the night, I ran away from all the pain, With my captors in hot pursuit, They chased after me as I ran away. But You are my guiding light, Guiding myself and many others Through the arid and sandy terrain.

You parted the waters of the sea So we could make it across safe and sound. I've finally been released from the chains With the help of Your love and endurance That has saved me from uncertainty, because I believed in the Living Hope! At last, in Christ, I can finally be free from it all. week five

EXODUS 20:1-17



EXODUS 20:1-17

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

¹Then God spoke all these words:

- I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.
- ³ Do not have other gods besides me.
- ⁴ Do not make an idol for yourself, whether in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. ⁵Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, 6but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands.
- ⁷ Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name.
- ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: ⁹You are to labor six days and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. You must not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female servant, your livestock, or the resident alien who is within your city gates. 11 For the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and everything in them in six days; then he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and declared it holy.
- ¹² Honor your father and your mother so that you may have a long life in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
- ¹³ Do not murder.
- ¹⁴ Do not commit adultery.
- ¹⁵ Do not steal.
- ¹⁶ Do not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- ¹⁷ Do not covet your neighbor's house. Do not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Sermon Notes

Life Group Discussion Guide

LEAN IN

somewhere in between? Share some stories about how you thought of rules as a kid.
LOOK DOWN
Read Exodus 20:1-6 (pg. 88)
What commands does God give His people first?
What reasoning does God give for these commands?

When you were growing up, were you more of a rule follower, a rule breaker, or

LOOK OUT

Which of the 10 Commandments are respected by our culture,
and which of them do people tend to ignore or even disagree with?
Why do you think God started the 10 Commandments with
commands against idolatry?
LOOK IN
Which of the 10 Commandments do you think is the most difficult
for you to uphold?
God is clearly concerned with idolatry. What are you most tempted
to worship in your life other than God?

RHYTHM REMINDER 0 Serve the Community



The Rescued Life, God's Perfect Plan Original Artwork by Julie Ellis

LUTHER & THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

By John Thomas, Lead Discipleship Pastor

Martin Luther (1483-1546), the most prominent figure of the 16th-century Reformation, is best known for his Ninety-Five Theses, which he famously posted on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. Core to his "protests" were the corruptions of the Roman Catholic Church, which had led to a distortion of the gospel through, among other things, the selling of indulgences to secure one's forgiveness of sins, as well as for those bodily in grave whose souls, according the teaching of the Catholic church, were held in purgatory.

At the heart of Luther's protest was the conviction that "the true treasure of the Church is the most holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God" (Thesis 62), not indulgences or any work of men. It was this conviction, driven by a return to biblical authority, that salvation is by grace through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9), shared among contemporary reformers, that ultimately gave rise to various political and ecclesiastical reforms, and a spiritual awakening that still reverberates throughout the world.

As we study the book of Exodus, we see a covenant-making God who chooses, blesses, and commissions His people to serve as holy representatives of His name and Kingdom to the nations. The law and its commandments are given, in part, to showcase what holy, or set apart, living looks like. Bearing this in mind, how are we to think about the reforming work of Luther? Would not law-keeping just be another



form of self-dependent righteousness, where it is our works that serve to save us? Are the 10 Commandments, the summary of God's eternal moral law, a de facto litmus test of righteousness, or is something else going on here?

Luther spoke frequently about the value and purpose of the law, much of which is captured in his remarkable 77-volume collection-Luther's Works-which includes his lectures, sermons, theological treatises, and biblical commentaries. A few of my personal favorites:

"The Law was not given to justify or give life, but to lead us to Him who does justify and give life." (Vol 26)

"The Law says, 'Do this,' and it is never done. Grace says, 'Believe in this,' and everything is already done." (Vol 31)

"Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works. The Law demands works and obedience, but the Gospel gives grace and faith." (Vol 31)

The law and its commandments, then, primarily serve as a mirror, revealing our sin (Romans 7:7). They were never intended to be the be-all and end-all, but as the author of Hebrews writes in 10:1, "...the law has only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the reality itself of those things, it can never perfect the worshipers..."

The question, then, isn't "Can or should we keep the law?" but rather, "What happens when we don't?" When we fail (and we do, daily), where do we turn?

Some turn inward, doubling down on self-effort and rule-keeping, hoping to finally meet their own standards, let alone those of a holy God. Along the way, there's hiding and shame mixed with false pride for those moments, days, or even seasons when we seem to be hitting the mark. For others, there's a resignation that drives us further into sin. In short, if you can't beat them (our wicked devices), join them full on and enjoy what you can.

Both paths lead to spiritual bankruptcy. But the gospel offers a better way. The invitation is to rest in the grace of the One who perfectly fulfilled the law on our behalf. It is in Christ's finished work that we find true life and lasting hope:

> "And when you were dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive with him and forgave us all our trespasses. He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it away by nailing it to the cross." (Colossians 2:13-14)

Fear of God Original Artwork by Kimberly Johnson

CHRIST CONNECTION

By Van Ibasan, Lead Pastor of Mariners Oceanside

Let's be real. The Ten Commandments aren't just hard; they're impossible. Not because they're flawed, but because we are. Exodus 20 gives us the gold standard of righteousness. And if you're honest, you don't make it past the first one without realizing, "Yeah, there are idols lurking in my heart."

This is precisely where the beauty of Christ breaks in. He didn't come to crush us with the Law. He came to fulfill it for us (Matthew 5:17). Every command we failed to keep, Jesus kept. The righteous life the Law requires, Jesus lived. The judgment the Law demands, Jesus bore.

And now, this is the good news. When you're in Christ, you're not under the weight of the Law anymore. You're under grace. You don't obey to earn anything. You obey because you've been given everything. The Spirit of God now empowers you to live in the freedom of obedience, not to gain God's love, but because you already have it.

The Law shows us our need. Jesus meets it. The Law shows us the standard. Jesus is it. And in Him, the life the Law describes becomes not just possible, but desirable.



HOPE IN EPIC, EVERYDAY MOMENTS

By Lorraine O'Keefe

Hope rarely comes in dramatic ways. More often, it arrives in the quiet, steady moments—the kinds we might overlook if we're not paying attention. Alexander Torres knows this well. His life is a testament to the epic work God does in the ordinary: through people who care, prayers that persist, and the courage to take small steps forward.

But his story didn't start there.

A LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM

"I've been through a lot in my life—addiction, incarceration, losing jobs, relationships," Alexander began. "I tried to fix things myself, but nothing worked. I tried reaching for God before, but I approached Him on my terms. I wanted to make deals. I'd tell God, 'If you do this, I'll do that.' But it never worked. God doesn't work that way."

A breakthrough came in September 2023 when a chance encounter with a stranger named Jeff became a turning point. "Jeff saw something in me," Alexander recalled. "He didn't judge me. He just asked, 'How can I help?'" That question changed his life. "Jeff helped me get into detox, found me a place to stay, and walked with me every step of the way," Alexander said.



FINDING STRUCTURE AND HOPE

Alexander's journey eventually led him to the OC Rescue Mission, a place he describes as "blessed." It wasn't an easy start. "I walked in with a bad attitude," he admitted. "But the people here—they didn't give up on me. They pray with me, listen to me, and remind me of God's promises."

Trey, his case manager, helped him take his next steps forward. He became a steady guide when life felt overwhelming. "Trey didn't fix everything for me," Alexander reflected. "But he gave me direction and showed me that I could change, one step at a time."

The OC Rescue Mission gave Alexander the structure he craved and the community he didn't know he needed. He's found himself stepping into roles of leadership, encouraging new students, and sharing his testimony. "I tell people, 'There's hope,'" he said. "If God can change my life, He can change yours."

One of Alexander's favorite ways to encourage others is by handing out Bible verses he's written on slips of paper. "I read the verse first, pray over it, and then pass it on," he explains. "Sometimes people come back and tell me, 'That verse was exactly what I needed.' That's not me—that's God speaking."

A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

For Alexander, joining Mariners Church at the OC Rescue Mission was another step in his rescue journey. "People here care about me," he said with a smile. "They ask how I'm doing, they pray for me, and they show up."

He names several members who have made a lasting impact: Dan, Ligia at the donut table, Barry, and Steve and Mary. "They've all welcomed me like family," Alexander shared. "It's amazing to be part of a community where you're seen and valued."

Dan, who volunteers alongside Alexander, has shown him what friendship looks like: quiet, dependable, and real. "Dan doesn't treat me like someone broken," Alexander said. "He treats me like a friend, like someone who belongs."

These aren't just people who helped Alexander—they've become friends, and Alexander doesn't take that lightly. "I remember their names—and so many others—because they're part of my life," he said. "God brought them into my story, and I'm grateful every day."

A MINISTRY THAT MATTERS

Being part of Rooted, Mariners' 10-week small group experience, deepened Alexander's faith and gave him opportunities to serve. He's even begun visiting a local senior living facility with other church members. "I love spending time with the residents," he said. "They remind me of the loneliness I felt in prison. Just being there, praying with them, and sharing verses—it means so much."

On one recent visit, he was greeted by Larry, a resident who immediately recognized him. They sat together, and Alexander prayed with Larry, sharing Scripture and simply listening. Later, Alexander stood up after the Mariners Hosted Here message. He was the first to share, quoting Romans 15:7: "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

"We don't need drugs, money, or anything else from the world to feel accepted. That's not what Christ looks for, and it's not what this community is about. The world judges us—puts labels on us for where we've been or what we've done—but in God's community, it's different. We're accepted for who we are, no matter where we've come from."

Moments like this are why Alexander keeps showing up, offering reminders of hope in places where hope can feel scarce.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Alexander lives with a quiet gratitude and an unmistakable presence of hope and encouragement—remembering names, offering Scriptures, praying with seniors, and seeing people first for who they are beyond titles, appearances, or pasts. But his story is still being written.

Alexander sees there's opportunity to do more. He's even asking the seniors and his community from Mariners at the OC Rescue Mission who gather for the online service at the local senior living community to pray. "We need more volunteers to drive me and my peers here so we can gather with you each Thursday. Also, it would be great to start joining you for game night on Tuesdays. Pray for more volunteers."

Once defined by a past that seemed inescapable, Alexander Torres' journey is one of second chances. It's a story of rescue and redemption. His life is proof that God works in the quiet and the ordinary. He works through relationships, small prayers, and steady steps forward. It's a reminder that God's epic work happens in everyday moments. Because, as Alexander declares, "There is hope."







Honor Your Father and Mother Original Artwork by Renata Costa



IN HIS **PRESENCE**

By Rose S.

David said in Psalm 51:11, "Do not banish me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me." It was the key to his wisdom and strength. Jesus Himself left us with an example. He rose up early, a great while before daybreak, to spend time in His Father's presence. That's where He gained insight and empowerment, before circumstances demanded His attention. There is purpose in His presence.

In the book of Exodus, Moses had the monumental task of leading the children of Israel into the Promised Land. He knew what he was up against.

In desperation, he said, "'If your presence does not go,' Moses responded to him, 'don't make us go up from here'" (Exodus 33:15). He sought the presence of the Lord as he navigated his journey into uncharted territories.



The 10 Commandments Original Artwork by Fernando Lopez

Despite the grumbling and complaining, the setbacks and oppositions, he fulfilled his divine mission. It was the presence of the Lord amongst them that led them to the Promised Land and set them apart from all other nations. Moses' life and leadership are a testament to the necessity of God's presence.

In 2020, I was facing a spiritual dilemma. The COVID ban had been lifted, and churches were beginning to open up their doors. Although I was attending a church at the time, I looked at five different churches and asked God which one I should attend. I wanted to be where He wanted me to be. As I lingered in His presence, His answer took me by surprise. When I sensed Him leading me to Mariners Church, I blurted out, "You must be kidding." I didn't fully agree with God, but I obeyed. My future blessings were being born, but I couldn't see it at the time. I started attending Mariners out of curiosity, being a spectator instead of a participant. I finally surrendered and became involved by signing up for the Prayer Team. Serving brought fulfillment to my soul. His presence in my life constantly reminded me of my sacred role. Changes and growth came with obedience and abiding in His presence.

As children of the Most High, abiding in His presence is the most noble and worthy privilege. His presence helps us to face the fiery trials in life with grace and a supreme level of confidence, knowing that He cares. Even when life seems hopeless and beyond repair, He clothes us with strength and courage to move forward. By dwelling in His presence, we are more in tune with His still, small voice. He lovingly reminds us of hidden secrets in our lives that may hinder our walk with Him, or harm us morally or emotionally. In His presence, there is fullness of joy.

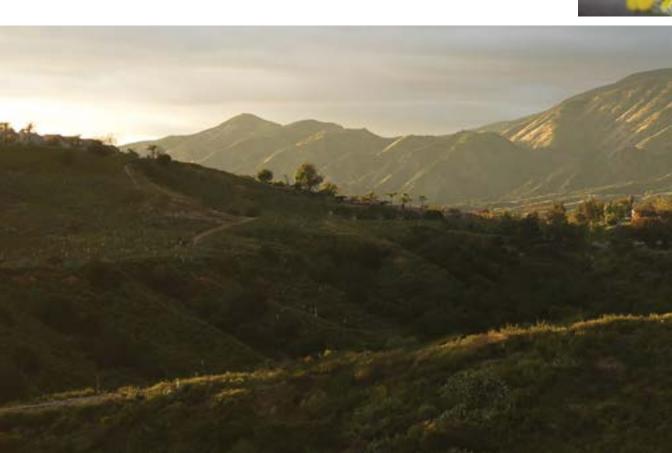
On the other hand, by not spending time in His presence, we can become spiritually dry—lost and alone—always striving and not being fulfilled.

Let's evaluate our lives. Let's practice His presence.

As Christians, seeking His presence should be a priority. It should not be an obligation, but a delight. We are His habitation, and He longs for a relationship with us. Do we value His presence or do we substitute it with something else? Let's be intentional about spending time with Him. Let's hunger and thirst for more of Him, instead of relying on our own abilities.

How often do we think of being alone in His presence, getting away from the hustle and bustle and away from everyone and everything? Like it was for Moses, is God's presence so vital in our lives that we are not willing to go any further without Him?

His presence will make a difference in our lives. It's necessary for the journey ahead.











week six

EXODUS 25:1-8, 40:34-38

GOD'S PRESENCE ON THE JOURNEY



EXODUS 25:1-8

OFFERINGS TO BUILD THE TABERNACLE

¹The LORD spoke to Moses: ² "Tell the Israelites to take an offering for me. You are to take my offering from everyone who is willing to give. ³This is the offering you are to receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze; ⁴blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen and goat hair; ⁵ram skins dyed red and fine leather; acacia wood; ⁶oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; ⁷ and onyx along with other gemstones for mounting on the ephod and breastpiece.

8 "They are to make a sanctuary for me so that I may dwell among them."

EXODUS 40:34-38

THE LORD'S GLORY

³⁴The cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵Moses was unable to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud rested on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

³⁶The Israelites set out whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle throughout all the stages of their journey. ³⁷If the cloud was not taken up, they did not set out until the day it was taken up. ³⁸For the cloud of the LORD was over the tabernacle by day, and there was a fire inside the cloud by night, visible to the entire house of Israel throughout all the stages of their journey.

Sermon Notes

Life Group Discussion Guide

LEAN IN

Some people prefer to be alone, while others fear being by themselves for any extended period of time. Do you wish you had more or less alone time? Why?

LOOK DOWN

Read Exodus 25:1-8 (pg. 108)

What is God's ultimate purpose in asking His people to collect offerings for the construction of the tabernacle?

Read Exodus 40:34-38 (pg. 108)

What role did the tabernacle serve in the community as God led His people to the Promised Land?

LOOK OUT

Why do many people feel like God is absent from the world and all He has created?					
How does God "tabernacle" among us today?					
LOOK IN					
How has God made His presence known in your life?					
What can you do in your everyday life to be reminded of the presence of God throughout your day?					

RHYTHM REMINDER











Sacrificial Generosity





God's Dwelling with His People



Eden as the Garden Temple



Tabernacle in the Desert



Solomon's Temple



Genesis 2:8-9, 3:8

The Garden of Eden functions as God's original "cosmic temple," where He dwells with humanity in communion and worship. It symbolizes God's presence and the ideal of a place of worship on Earth.

God Dwelling Among His People

Exodus 25:8, 40:34-35

The Tabernacle is a portable

"Eden," designed as a

temporary structure where

God's presence dwells with

His people in the wilderness.

It functions as a miniature

representation of Eden,

with elements echoing the

original temple.

God's Dwelling in a Permanent Structure

1 Kings 6:1, 8:10-11

A permanent structure in Jerusalem, signifying God's dwelling place on Earth and a center for worship.

Those who have carefully excavated the Scriptures have marveled at God's unapologetic aim and mission to be in close relationship with His people. God's ultimate aim is not simply forgiveness but fellowship. He desires to be with His people. This is demonstrated through the temple theme, which serves as a unifying thread throughout the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament temple, tabernacle, and even the Garden of Eden serve as prefigurations of the ultimate temple: God making His dwelling with His people in the age to come. Until then, we experience the nearness of God through the Holy Spirit who lives in us.



Jesus as the Temple



Believers as the Temple



New Heaven and New Earth



John 1:14, 2:19-21

Jesus is the temple, fulfilling the symbolism of the tabernacle and Solomon's temple.

"Jesus' very being" is the place where God's glory is fully revealed.

The Church as the New Temple of God

1 Corinthians 3:16, 1 Peter 2:5

of Christ, is the new temple—a spiritual house where God's presence dwells in the people of God who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, making the beginning of God's new creation and the one to come.

God's Presence Fills All of Creation

Revelation 21:22

In the new creation,
there is no need for
a physical temple,
as God's unfiltered
presence fills all of
creation, bringing to
fulfillment history's
temple imagery, where
God's glory is revealed
as intended.

CHRIST CONNECTION

By Chris Li, High School Pastor

What is glory? It can be hard to explain. But similar to beauty, when we see it, we know it. Simply put, God is invisible, but His glory is His character made visible.

In Exodus, God's glory filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34). There was also a cloud and fire visible to God's people, which symbolized the presence of God. As the cloud and fire moved, so would the people of God. But the issue is that not even Moses could enter the tabernacle. So if Moses could not be in the presence of God's glory, what hope is there for us?

Thousands of years later, the glory of God would finally be revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. The apostle John talks about how Jesus dwells among us and His glory can be seen (John 1:14). When we see His glory, we are then transformed from glory to glory, as we become more like Jesus-and we look forward to appearing with Jesus in glory (Colossians 3:4). In the last book of the Bible, John shares a vision of the new Heaven and new Earth. There will be no temple, no sun or moon, no cloud or fire "because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb" (Revelation 21:23).





CYCLE BREAKING & BREAKING BREAD

By Kathryn McLeland

From the first meeting, it is clear Karissa and Justin Popplewell share a lot of similarities. Both grew up with three generations of teen mothers, absent fathers, complex step-fathers, and had to learn early on to take charge of their own safety and stability.

At one point, Justin and Karissa were coming to Mariners for healing in their marriage and deeper relationship. They now stand on the security of a loving Father, celebrating their 12 years of "Daily I Do" while parenting two little girls and growing in their faith as a part of a Life Group.

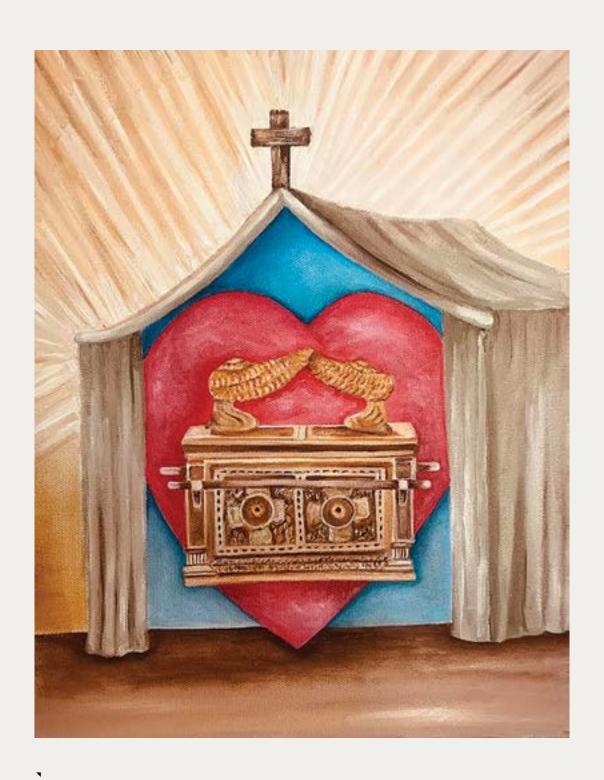
The Popplewells were thrust into leading with vulnerability the first night of Rooted, when they "accidentally" shared their story first. Through the 10 weeks of Rooted, they were affirmed by the group as "cycle breakers" who had shattered generational patterns of pain in their families of origin and chose a new path through Jesus' power.

When old patterns of broken family ties and self-reliance resurface, it is their security in the Lord and looking back on His faithfulness that keeps them walking toward abundant life in Jesus.

One of the key aspects of the Popplewells' Life Group is sharing a meal around the table. Justin, a certified fermentation nerd, nurtures a sourdough starter that can be kept alive through generations. "Bread is referenced as the food of God," he said. We see this throughout Scripture: manna provided by God in the wilderness (Exodus 16:31) and Jesus, the Bread of Life (John 6:48) and the source of sustenance and provision. The Life Group spends time celebrating, hiking, studying God's Word, and breaking bread around the table.

Karissa and Justin's view of security has changed over the last few years. They continue to release control to the Lord as He continues to show His faithfulness and perfect timing. The dinner table has expanded in their family to include over 10 kids within the Life Group, holding the value of time together and sharing life.

Today, Karissa and Justin are growing in their faith and trusting God's consistent faithfulness. They have a new community and deep relationships. It is a life exclusively brought together by God, who shows His love to them as they keep His commands and live in community.



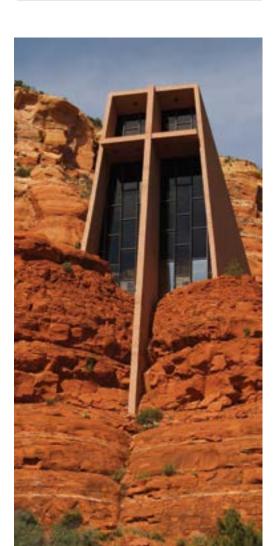
Behold His Glory Original Artwork by Julie Ellis





GOD'S GLORIOUS PRESENCE

By Erica Kim



In the last four years that I've drawn closer to God, He's spoken to me through my dreams twice. Both times, I was going through immensely challenging and stressful seasons at work. In my most recent dream, I experienced His presence in a way that was so vivid and profound that it's a feeling I hope to never forget.

It was a Monday, and I awoke earlier than I intended to. Before opening my eyes, I started praying, which is my usual routine to begin my day. My prayer that day: God, let me feel Your presence today. When I opened my eyes, I realized that it was still dark outside and much too early to start my day, so I decided to go back to sleep.

It was then that I fell asleep and found myself in a powerful dream.

In my dream, I was walking in a church-like setting that I didn't recognize. The pews were filled with strangers from all walks of life. As I walked in front of the rows of people, I prayed over them the same prayer from my morning: God, let us feel Your presence today.

Suddenly, a magnificent light started to shine within the room. I watched the strangers in the room, and while I couldn't read their thoughts, I knew they were awestruck. One person in front of me came to the realization of the weight of their sins. Before I could process anything else, the light reached me, and I only felt one thing: His presence.



It is not possible to adequately describe in words how this felt in my dream. It was as if every single cell in my body was vibrating with luminescence, overpowered by a surge of endless energy, and thereby worshiping His holy presence. My senses were shocked by the magnitude of His presence.

He was everywhere.

He was everything.

He was glorious.

I was so struck by God's powerful presence that I could only utter three words. Three words to describe what it felt like to be near Him. In my dream, my voice was nothing but a whisper as I said, "I am nothing." And then I said it again, "I am nothing." My whispers reminded me of Isaiah when he said, "Woe is me for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Armies" (Isaiah 6:5).

When I awoke, tears filled my eyes because of how overwhelming this dream was. Part of me wondered if my wild imagination took me on a crazy ride, but deep down, my soul knew this was God's way of answering my prayer from earlier in the morning. He graciously showed me His presence in a way that I could never have imagined.

In Exodus, Moses has several interactions with the Lord. He is one of the few people in the Bible who came face-to-face with God. He asked the Lord to show him His glory (Exodus 33:18) so that he could feel assurance to lead the people of Israel, as the Lord commanded. There are several descriptions of God's presence in Exodus, most of which describe Him as a powerful force of fire, smoke, storm, and cloud.

After Moses met with God at Mount Sinai, his face shone so brightly that the other Israelites were afraid to come near him. It was as if Moses' face reflected the glory of the light of God after meeting with Him. As Charles Spurgeon described, "The face of Moses was to God what the moon is to the sun."

The rest of my week following that dream was nothing short of madness and permeated with anxiety. But every time I felt beat down, overwhelmed, and just exhausted, I remembered my dream. I remembered the Lord's omnipotent

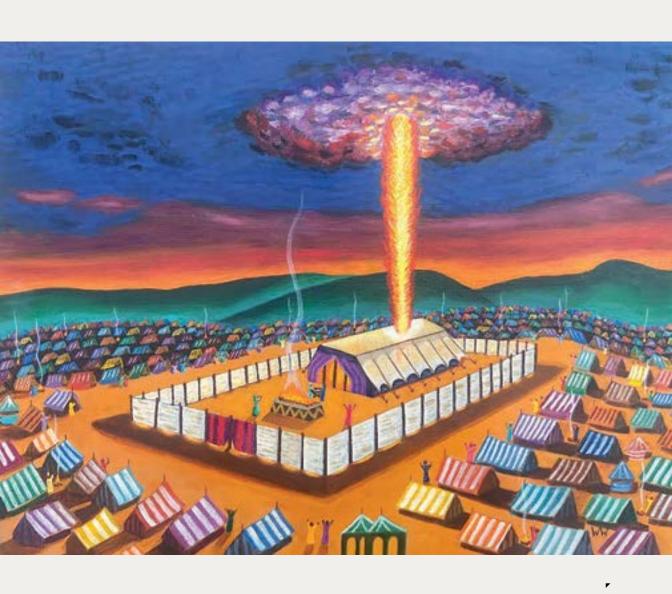
presence, His wonderful peace, and the freedomIfeltthroughHislove.Iremembered God's promise to always be with us and never abandon us (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Moreover, I asked myself: how can I take the light that was shone upon me in my dreams and shine upon others around me?

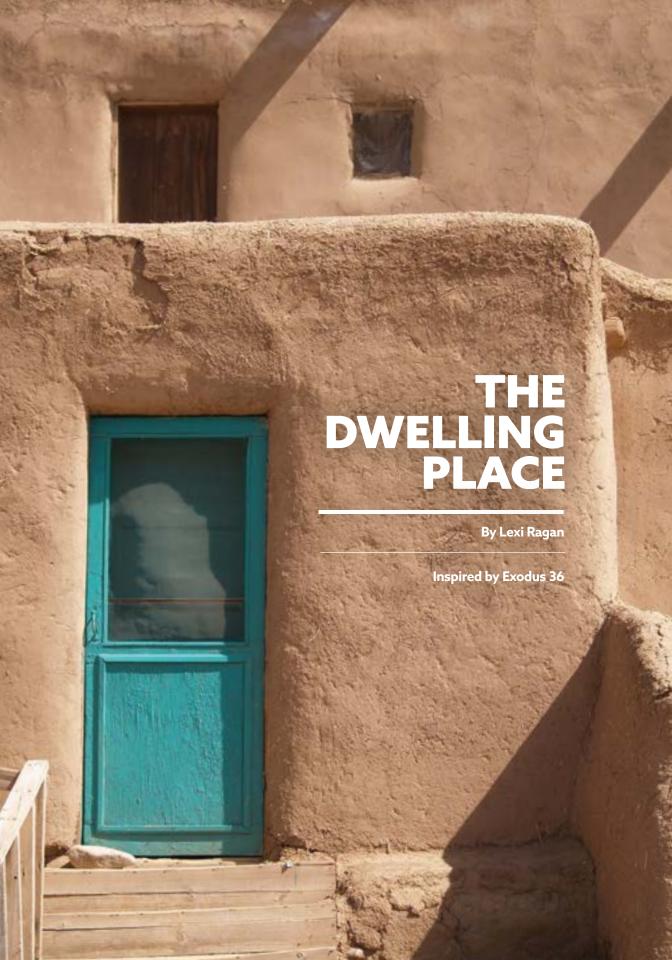
I consider myself incredibly blessed to have experienced this dream. It is a reminder to me that God is always present on our journey through life. And even though I may not physically feel His glory in the same awe-inspiring manifestation like my dream, His presence is still real and the Holy Spirit resides within me in a very tangible way.

Through my experience, I'm comforted by these words that God said to Moses: "... My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exodus 33:14).





Tabernacle Original Artwork by Bill West



God's blueprint unfolds

before the artisan's eyes,
lay out the materials to
make a tent of meeting
meant for Maker and man,
call it a sacred date where
covenant love fills the air,
a sanctuary that foreshadows

Christ tabernacling and
for His children to then transform
into human
where His Holy presence
d'

O Gracious Lor'
inside ov
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SPECIAL THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO
COURAGEOUSLY SHARED THEIR STORIES
OF HOW THE LORD HAS RESCUED THEM AND
WORKED IN INCREDIBLE WAYS IN THEIR LIVES.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO VOLUNTEER WITH MARINERS CREATIVE ARTS!

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible ®



Postures of Praise
Original Artwork by Sheila Parsons

