



Sunday:

Sunday School – 9:45 am

Worship – 10:45 am

Wednesday:

The Rock Wednesday – 6:45pm

BIG EVENTS:

One day Mission to Atlanta – October 17th

Outdoor Movie Night – TBA

Hallelujah Night – October 31st

BONFIRE - November

Refuel – MLK Weekend 2016

DNOW – (early Spring)

Summer Camp – June 2016

Upcoming Events:

TONIGHT – The Covenant Defined (Exodus)

One day Mission to Atlanta – October 17th

Outdoor Movie Night – TBA

Hallelujah Night – October 31st

- - - REFUEL – MLK WEEKEND (23 Student Spots left) - - -

place a deposit by September 27th for a \$20 discount and to be on the official list
SIGN UP AT THE CHALKBOARD IN THE BACK OF THE ROCK.

Main Idea:

The Covenant creating God is both strong and compassionate.

God reveals Himself in 3 ways at the beginning of Exodus

1. God has a heart (2:24, 3:7, ch's 15-16)
2. God has a name (3:14, 6:2-3)
3. God has muscle (7:4, ch's 7-14)

How do you respond to a God this loving and strong?

The Hope & Prayer

The hope of this devotion book is to provide the opportunity for students and adults to spend time with God in His Word and through prayer. There are many great devotion books available to us and we are thankful you have chosen to journey through God's Word with this particular one. We hope and pray that students and adults take this opportunity seriously and become intentional in the time they devote to Him each day. We believe if this happens our walk with Him will strengthen.

The Plan – ABIDE 2015/16

This year we are going through the most beautiful story in the world on Wednesday nights. The story of the Bible is one of romance, jealousy, envy, pride, grace, mercy, power, humility and so much more. There is no way we could ever hope to cover every detail but we do seek to cover the high points on Wednesday and fill in the in between during the week through our devotions.

It is so important that you get on dive into these devotions with us as we seek to know what the Bible is all about and see how it helps us to know our God and follow Him.

Each devotion has a date so if you happen to miss a day or two the best thing to do is jump in on that date. We've set up the devotion to where you can use Saturday and Sunday as catch up days.

Above all we want you in the Word of God. We realize this is the best one but still it's a devotion written to gather the people of God around the Word of God. We hope and pray you'll join us as we dive into the story of the Bible this year!





Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph

Do you remember the promise God made Abraham? Do you remember the *promises* God made to Abraham? It happened multiple times. First in Genesis 12 and then in chapter 15. Inside of all those good things that God was going to do, something should have stuck out. God promised that his descendants (the ones that would become a great nation) would be slaves...for 400 years.

God's people go through tough times.

God knows. God cares. And God has a plan.

And so Genesis ends with Joseph, Abraham's great-grandson, one of the greatest leaders over the greatest nation in the world. And as Exodus opens Joseph's family is large and growing. Then something turns-a new king who did not know Joseph. This king is clearly scared by the numbers, and they drive the Hebrews into slavery. The prophecy told to Abraham has become fulfilled.

But the story doesn't end there. As much as the king of Egypt wanted to destroy God's people, God wouldn't allow it. God was looking out for His people. God used the obedience of the midwives (women trained to aid in the birth of children). These women disobeyed the king and refused to kill the Hebrew boys. Exodus 1:20 says, "So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty."

The women feared God. The people grew and they became mighty.

As we said last week, the goal of reading the Bible is not simply to find moral truths, we must look to understand who God is by His words.

God uses obedience to work His plan. Does He need us to obey? Absolutely not. But how does God choose to work in His world and in His people? He chooses to use our obedience.

God's plan involves His people's obedience.



Moses is called...

For many the story of the burning bush is quite familiar. A bush up in flames. A call from its midst. Moses goes is a changed man.

But inside of the story there is so much more...

Why did Moses have to take off his shoes?

Its an odd thing to read that God wanted Moses to remove his shoes. When you enter the Rock, or the Sunday Service you surely don't leave your shoes at the door. So why was Moses asked to do this? First, remember what he was doing just before the bush. He was herding cattle. His shoes would have been caked with the dust of the earth, the manure that littered the Midian hillside. Imagine entering the White House with your most trusted work boots on, the ones that have the holes and the dirt, and the small rocks lodged in the treads. God declared that Moses must remove the filth before coming in His presence.

*God **chose** to use Moses*

God could have lead His people out of Egypt by Himself. God could have lead the congregation with a pillar of fire as He did later. He could have lead them in any way He so chose, and the way God chose was through Moses, a man.

Moses responds a lot like we would

God speaks from a burning bush in the middle of no where. God tells Moses that He is going to lead the nation of Israel out of slavery in Egypt and take them to the promised land, as told to Abraham many years before. Moses responded by focusing on himself. He focused on his abilities, his failings, and his enemy.

God Gives Moses His Very Name

Moses was self-conscious and scared. He had put the emphasis on himself. God changed the subject back to Himself. God tells Moses who He is. God is the focus. This is the way our lives should be.

What is your focus? Is it on God, or on yourself?

Saturday – catch up or reflection

Saturdays are meant to use as catch up days or extended times of reflection where we revisit some truths of God's Word. Did you miss anything, hurry through or simply miss a day? Use today to ensure you didn't miss one thing or possibly just go deeper in His Word. We offer 5 days but of course the goal is that each day we are spending time with Him, in His Word.

What does it mean to Reflect?

By reflection we mean thinking a little more on what we've seen or read throughout the week. A good way to do this is by asking some questions:

1. What sticks out from your time in the Word?
2. What are some things I need to continue to dwell on?
3. What did I learn about God this week?
4. What did I learn about myself this week?
5. What is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?

If you desire to read something new we'd encourage you to read through Psalm 119

Sunday is a day of rest so enjoy the day of worship!



Then the plagues

Whether you grew up in church, saw one of the films depicting Exodus, or was just taught the story of the plagues, you know it is some pretty crazy stuff. It must be for Hollywood to take the time and money to make two movies about it in my lifetime. These plagues can seem random, and they make God look angry and sort of mean.

First, let us remember that Pharaoh has been stubborn, prideful, and harsh to God's people and thus towards God. The people of Egypt were punished for their ruler.

Second, the plagues were not simply some punishment God concocted up to be devious towards the the people. The plagues had a specific aim. It was all about showing Pharaoh, Egypt, Israel, even the whole world one thing-that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was the one, true, powerful God. The rest were imposters. Each plagues is specifically addressed at one or more of Egypt's gods.

Egypt was a polytheistic society. You probably know more about the polytheism of Greece or Rome with people like Zeus, Achilles, and Athena (to name just a few). Polytheism is clearly a man-made religion. They looked around, saw the variety of people on earth, saw how they had various interest, how they constantly fought, fell in love with each other, helped those who were nice to them, but overall are very flakey. They determined that the gods in heaven must act a lot like the people on earth-just with more power.

Just by understanding the uniqueness of Christianity, we can understand that it is very unlikely someone would have just made up a God like the one in the Bible.

There are several plagues and we could certainly look at each one and show how each one was a direct refutation of the Egyptian gods. Instead let us look at just three.

Nile turned to blood. For any civilization a major river becomes a huge part of the culture. In America the Mississippi river has served as the major border before we explored the west, became the major transportation route before interstates, and thus many of our country's major cities on located on its banks. Egypt had several gods which is protected the Nile or came from it. When God, via Moses, turns the river to blood he is making a claim that these little gods are weaker and smaller than He is-because they are false.

Hail. It doesn't happen much, and so when it does hail is kind of cool. These round balls of ice come crashing from the sky. But hail can be a real threat. A major hail storm can ruin vehicles, hurt people, and can destroy crops and animals. A hail storm would have been devastating to the food supply of the Egyptians. Like most other cultures with several gods, the Egyptians had several devoted to crops. There is a lot of growing plants, whether its a small garden or a huge plantation, that is outside of human's hands. You can do everything right and an early frost, or too much rain and all your work is ruined. Its easy to see why the Egyptians wanted several gods to be in charge of the crops. They wanted someone to protect them and someone to blame when things didn't work. By God destroying these crops He essentially says-*Your gods are no match for me. They cannot save you. I am the True God.*

We've been talking about the gods of the Egyptians. But we all have gods. Things that worship more than the one true God. Maybe you worship sports, or good grades, or being lazy, or a guy or girl. Whatever you love more than the one true God is a false god. It cannot save you anymore than the god of the Nile could save the Egyptians.



the Passover

Now we come to one of my favorite passages in the Old Testament. God knew how important this moment was and He gave great details about both what happened and what should be remembered. There is great joy in this story but it comes at a cost.

The last of the plagues was the grand finale. God went after Pharaoh himself. Pharaoh had tried to make himself equal to God, defying His demands for His people. The Egyptians already thought that their leaders were sons of the gods and Pharaoh certainly believed the hype. They were to protect their people. They certainly wanted to protect their family.

I love God. One of the things I love about Him is that when its time for business He waste no time. Exodus 11 records what God told Moses, "About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn of the land of Egypt shall die." That doesn't need much explanation right.

Remember, all of this is to show how great He was to Egypt and the rest of the World. But the best part is the exception. Obviously, God knew which houses were Egyptians and which ones were Hebrew. But God wanted everyone to know that He knew. This is what he did...

God told the people to take a lamb, one lamb per house. (if they couldn't afford a lamb they could split one with a neighbor) The lamb had to be perfect. A perfect lamb was costly. It couldn't have deformities, it couldn't be blind or have a disease. They would get the lamb on the 10th day of the month. They had to keep it until the 14 day. Why?

I think God wanted these families to get attached to the little animals. It was just enough time to feel like you need to name them. In four days you could get attached. But on the fourth day, they had to give the lamb up. This is the beauty of the story. You see, on the 14th day, the people had to sacrifice their lambs. Eat the lamb. Smear its blood around the door. That night if the blood was there, the angel of death sent from God would move on. If its wasn't there. If the lamb had no been killed. The angel would visit that house. And it would kill the firstborn son.

Can you imagine the conversations that would take place? A lamb is brought home from market. It stays in your house for four days. You would get attached. I know I would. Then your dad says you have to kill the lamb. I imagine children pleaded with their fathers to spare the child. It was at this point that God gave fathers the greatest teaching opportunity of their lives.

They would sit the child down and simply explain, "It is the lamb or you. You see, you are suppose to die tonight, but if the lamb is sacrificed he can take your place. We will take his blood and smear it on the door and when God sees it, He will pass over the house and you will live."

THIS IS US! We are the firstborn sons. We are the ones who are suppose to die. Romans says, "The penalty for sin is death." But Jesus died. John called Jesus, the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. That he is and this passage from Exodus explains what he meant.

But if Christ has never redeemed you. If you are still living in your sin. If you have not become a true follower of Christ-then you will die. and face judgment. But it doesn't have to be. The lamb has died...for you.



On the Mountain

These devotions have to skip several chapters and it is very sad. In order to get everything we need we go from the Passover Lamb to Mount Sinai-the place Moses received the Ten Commandments. But before we get there, you need to see something.

In Exodus 19, just before the commandments are given-God came down to the mountain. Beginning in verse 16, the scene is described. There is thunder and lightning. Thick clouds. Loud trumpet blast that caused the camp to tremble.

The Lord had come down to the mountain, it says, in fire. There were earthquakes. The trumpets got louder.

What is all this about?

As we have seen through Exodus, God shows Himself to be compassionate. He heard the cry of His people in slavery and took great care of them. He loved them out of bondage. It would be easy, I can imagine, for Israel to believe that they were just good friends with God. That since He loved them they were just buddies. Homeboys as the old shirt goes.

To understand the problem with this, let me tell you a story. The President of the United States is allowed to have friends. These friends might become hired as the President's aid. This means that they give their opinion to the President on decisions he has to make. This relationship could easily lead to arguments. One such story about the chief of staff (the head aid to the the President) and the President, and one of these arguments. The two had very different opinions about how a certain matter should be handled. When the President began to walk about, the aid shouted, "Mark!" The President turned slowly, looked his aid in the eye, and said "I am the President of the United States. Regardless of our relationship, you will address me as such." The aid had become too familiar with the President as his friends and he forget that he was also the leader of the free world. That position demands respect. It demands honor. When the friend gave him neither, the friendship suffered.

The sounds. The sights. God was reminding the people of Israel (at a time when it was easy to forget) That He was still God. He was the God powerful enough to separate the water of the Red Sea. He was powerful enough to bring the plagues. He took them out of Egypt by His hand. He loved them. But He was and is still God.

Maybe you are a lot like the Jews. You've been in church so long that its easy to see God as a best friend. A pal. He is a friend. Jesus taught us that He is a friend. BUT He is also the God over the whole Universe. He is the King.

Do you respect God? Do you view Him as the powerful King that He is?
Have you made God too small?

BONFIRE IS COMING

TBA - Sign up sheet coming soon

We hope you'll join us for an opportunity to hang out and gather around a huge fire! We'll have 'smores and other goodies as well as some chill time. More details to come

Outdoor Movie at The Adams Barn

TBA

A MOVIE ON A BARN? Brilliant! We'll be doing this before it gets too cold and will be working out a date soon. So be looking for more information in the next few weeks.

Hallelujah Night

October 31st, 5-7p

Awesome opportunity to serve the community and be on mission. Each SS class will have a booth so see your SS teacher for details and please sign up. It's not very fun to pick up everyone's slack....so help out and do your part.