

Everyone has a seat at the table

Table Group Experience

August 23, 2020

Mixer:

What GIF or meme would you use to describe your Summer 2020?

Connect:

What are 3 highlights of your Summer 2020? What did they do to refresh you?

Did you or your family have a transition this summer? How would you use Albert Einstein's definition of relativity to describe it - surprisingly fast or painfully slow?

Sermon Questions:

1. In Exodus 16, we find the Israelites in the desert, much like us in the 'fog' of a pandemic, or a transition. Pastor Jared refers to the overlap of their journey in the wilderness with our journey through 2020. What did he mean?
2. What was at the root of the Israelites grumbling and how did God respond in this particular passage? What does God want to say to us when we face hard transitions?
3. What was your takeaway from this week's message and how does it give you some clarity as you look at your Fall transitions?

Go Deeper:

The story out of Exodus is not the only time God's people faced hardship, misery and uncertainty. Look at the account of Jesus, God's own Son! What other stories come to mind and what was God's message to us in all of those stories?

In Daniel 3, we have the account of three Jewish captives, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who faced a fiery furnace if they did not bow to the gold statue that King Nebuchanezzar made. They remained loyal to the One True God and would not bow to another god despite their captivity in Babylon, a pagan nation. For them, in facing the punishment of the fiery furnace, there were only two possible scenarios of how it would end for them: either God would save them from being thrown in, or He would deliver them by their death out of the fire into His arms. And they were willing to take either and stood their ground and did not bow. What they did not realize though was that there was another possibility: God would save them *in and through* the fire. He got in there with them! And they came out unscathed - only the ropes around their hands were burned and they were freed from their bondages. (And it is interesting that the surprised king called the three young men out that he had put in there, but he was not about to tussle with that *fourth man* that appeared in the furnace!)

1. Why do you think God allows 'deserts and fires' in our lives? He could have plucked the Israelites out of Egypt and dropped them right into the Promised Land. He could have ended this pandemic before it even started. Why didn't He? What is He doing?
2. Why would the Israelites want to go back to Egypt, or even want death over the desert? Pastor Jared said they preferred misery over mystery? Why? What is your tendency in difficult times? Do you have an Egypt that you prefer to return to? How can you embrace the mystery of a new journey?
3. Pastor Jared encouraged us with Psalm 34:8 as an invitation: "Taste and see that the Lord is good; [blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.]" Read all of Psalm 34. What else is there that can help us trust that God's will and plan for us is good? What does it require us to do?
4. What gives you hope that there will be an end to a journey, a deliverance to the other side? This week, jot down some scripture verses and write them out as a prayer to equip you to face the next challenge in your life.

Pray This Week:

Church in the Park begins Sunday Aug 30!

Pray for each person to be reached by the love of Jesus - whether they are part of The Church at RB family, or they are just passersby in the park.