

Exodus 18:1-27 Life in the Family of God.

And Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people—that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. 2 Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, 3 with her two sons, of whom the name of one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land") 4 and the name of the other was Eliezer (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"); 5 and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness, where he was encamped at the mountain of God. 6 Now he had said to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her." 7 So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down, and kissed him. And they asked each other about their well-being, and they went into the tent. 8 And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them on the way, and how the Lord had delivered them. 9 Then Jethro rejoiced for all the good which the Lord had done for Israel, whom He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. 10 And Jethro said, "Blessed be the Lord, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh, and who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. 11 Now I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them. 12 Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and *other* sacrifices *to offer* to God. And Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

Title of the message today is life in the family of God.

A) One of the things that we see in scripture is this:

B) God never intended life in his family to revolve around one Charismatic leader

B) It was always meant to be a community – a family

1) where everyone Has a role – everyone is doing their part

C) That is true of the Church – that was True for the Children of Israel during the time of the Exodus

In the Kingdom of God everyone is important –

A) But no ONE is that important. – That was true of Moses as well.

B) I was reminded of a story this week of the lady who showed up a little late to church one Sunday.

C) She was greeted by a young man who was ushering –

1) she asked if she could be seated in the front row

D) This young usher said, “Well, ma’am, I’m happy to take you there, but I’ve got to tell you, you don’t want to sit on the front row,

E) See our pastor is really boring, and he will for sure put you to sleep, and that might be embarrassing for you.”

She said to him, “Young man, do you know who I am?” He responded, **No ma’am I don’t know who you are.**

A) Who are you? – I am the Pastors Mother!!!

B) The young man dropped his head in embarrassment.

C) But then he looked up at her and said, “Ma’am, do you know who I am?”

C) And she said, “No, young man, I don’t.” **He said, “Thank God” & turned around and walked off. 😊**

D) No one is that important – not even Moses

As we come to Chapter 18 – we see a reunion that takes place between Moses and his family

A) Big idea: **God desires His people to live as a healthy, God-centered community—marked by testimony, priorities and shared responsibility.**

B) Divide the chapter into 3 sections

The power of a testimony: V.1-12

A burden to Manage V.13-18

A Structure to Build V.19-27

C) The power of a testimony: V.1-12

D) It has been said that the Life of Moses can be divided into 3 forty year periods

First 40 years in Egypt becoming a Somebody – The Son of Pharaoh’s daughter – educated – a leader

A) But then he lashes out and kills the Egyptian task master who was mistreating some Hebrews Slaves

C) So then Moses flees out into the desert where he spends the **Next 40 years becoming a NOBODY.** –

D) He meets a family – the Father is Jethro the priest of Midian

Moses Becomes a SHEPHERD – lowest Job on the economic spectrum in Egypt –

A) No one aspired to be a shepherd

B) Moses marries Jethro’s daughter Zipporah and has two kids.

C) It is apparent that Moses doesn’t abandon his faith in Jehovah while in the desert

1) because of how he names his kids

He named his first son Gershom, because “I have been a sojourner in a foreign land,”

A) his second son Eliezer, because **“the God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh”**

B) First 40 yrs Somebody, 2nd 40 years a Nobody –

C) Last 40 years leading everybody – that is where we find Moses now. Israel delivered from Egypt.

D) Moses is on this journey with 2 million fickle people –

That is when he has this meet up with his immediate family – father in law wife and kids – reunited

A) Now scholars are a little divided on the religious background of Jethro

B) The text says that he was the priest of Midian.

C) The Midianites were a nomadic people who were descendants of Abraham

So they would have had some knowledge of Jehovah God – but they were not monotheistic –

A) The worship of one God

B) They were polytheistic – worshipped many gods –

C) Jethro being a priest – meant that he was both a religious and Civic leader amongst his people

1) Priest served as Judges

But here in our text – It seems that Jethro has a true Conversion Moment. 11 Now I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them.

I want you to note how this conversion moment happens – or How it takes place

A) V.1 says he heard what God had done for Moses and Israel

B) And set out to find Moses and bring his wife and kids to him –

C) Note the end of V.7 says and they went into the tent –

1) which means they went in to sit down and catch up over a meal

D) And it was there that Moses shared all that God had done for him and the people of Israel

Essentially Moses was telling his story – testimony of the faithfulness of God and the power of God.

A) Jethro in hearing this testimony ends up believing – Rejoicing – Declaring –

B) Now I know that The Lord – Jehovah is greater ...gods

Lesson: Your story can move someone from curiosity to conviction. - Now I know

C) Jethro offers sacrifices to Jehovah

Lesson #2 When God's people speak of His Works, others are drawn to worship

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven Matthew 5:16

This illustrates the power of a testimony –

A) The power of one person's life and God story can have on another person.

B) Your story CAN ALSO move someone from Curiosity to Conviction

1) **Never underestimate the power of a testimony!**

C) Here is something I have learned in my 40 plus years of ministry.

D) The most effective and lasting evangelistic ministry happens in relationships –

1) happens over a meal - Happens through a story

C) Listen This month marks the beginning of my 31st year as the SR pastor at CV. –

1) 30 yrs – except for a short 6 months

In my 30 yrs of being the SR pastor here,

A) There has always been a group of people that weekly went out street witnessing – Pier

B) And I think that is wonderful – And I would often hear from one of those people that did that –

1) we led 2 pp to Christ last night - **AWESOME**

C) I think that is awesome heaven is going to be populated by people

1) they introduced to Jesus out on the streets OF OCSD

But Check this out – In 30 yrs of being the SR pastor here- When I meet new people – love to ask them

A) How did you become a Christ follower – what brought you to our church?

B) In 30 yrs I have never once met someone who said to me:

1) these two guys led me to Jesus at the pier last night
And invited me to come here.

C) NOT ONCE IN 30 YRS

But this is what I have heard more times than I can count over the yrs

A) I lived by I worked with I work out with Who goes here

B) I Just watched their life over the years – they sat down with me shared their story – Jesus

C) They invited me to Easter in the park – Invited me to church – that is how I got saved –

1) ended up here – **MORE TIMES THAN I COUNT**

E) That my friend illustrates the power of living out your faith – the power of a testimony –

The power one life can have on another.

A) Here is something I would love to see become a part of our church culture here - DNA

B) That every single one of us in this church would have a ONE –

C) At least one person we are praying for – sharing with –

1) Looking for opportunities to share our story with

D) That there would be an intentional thought - Who is my ONE?

E) Pray about that today. – Who is my One ?

Here is a Wild thought: The Average American will eat at least 1100 meals in a year.

A) Some more – some a little less

B) What if you set out to eat 12 of those 1100 meals with Your One –

1) once month getting together with a person that doesn't know Jesus –

C) A person who is far from God – Share your LIFE YOUR story – And the gospel with

D) That could be radically powerful – like it was for Jethro here

After hearing what Moses shared – He is convinced and he builds an altar to worship God

A) So I love this story –

B) And what happens next is pivotal for the future for Moses and the PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

#2 A burden to Manage V.13-18

¹³ And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴ So when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?"

¹⁵ And Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶ When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws."

¹⁷ So Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you do is not good. ¹⁸ Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself."

So Jethro sees all that Moses is doing and he realizes this is not good.

A) Moses has become the counselor, police, judge and Jury for like 2 million people.

B) Son – this is not Good - You and the people are going to BURN OUT – FRUSTRATED

B) You could say that Israel had a systems problem and the System is Moses – He is the System

C) Imagine the wait times – I need an appointment Moses – ok 2 months from now ☺

1) There is this major bottleneck going on

D) Jethro is like Son – this is going to wear you out and frustrate the people –

1) this system isn't good for anyone

Lesson: Doing God's work the wrong way will eventually break you.

A) Jethro could tell this set up wasn't going to be good for anyone involved.

B) Not sustainable long haul - Eventually destroy Moses.

C) Interesting You can be intent on doing the right thing and serving God

1) Wrong way – eventually leads to disaster

Lesson #2 Burnout doesn't just affect you it affects everyone around you.

D) So Jethro who has been a leader and a judge is going to give Moses some good advice.

#3 A Structure to Build V.19-27

V.19 Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. ²⁰ And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.

²¹ Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be *that* every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear *the burden* with you. ²³ If you do this thing, and God *so* commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace.

Jethro introduces something that I love and that we see throughout the Bible – Team Leadership.

A) Listen the Church or a ministry is never ever meant to be built around one person –

B) One charismatic leader – CULTS

C) Healthy church leadership is always when there is a team of leaders that are working together –

1) accountable to one another – the Lord

D) Jethro says to Moses – You need to pick some men who can help you. *bear the burden with you*

Jethro says to Moses you need to share the load – share the weight – share responsibilities

A) You need to Know what your main Priorities are:

B)) Your role is to stand before God for the people – PRAYER – intercessor

C) And to teach the people the Word of God – what it means and how to apply it

D)) Moses your #1 Priorities ARE Prayer and the Word! **BIG PROBLEMS**

1) Everything else let others handle

Jethro is challenging Moses to live by a principle that is a good principle for all of us to learn:

A) “Manage your life by what is important, not by what is urgent.”

B) All of us have things that have been entrusted to us to take care – That is What’s important

C) But we can easily get distracted from doing what is important because of what seems Urgent

1) Emergency – Crisis

D) If you don’t decide what’s important, urgency will decide for you.”

E) Pastored in Oregon: Urgent call

So there is a need to Learn to order your life by what matters most, not what screams the loudest.”

A) Now that is easier said than done right ?

B) Imagine being in Moses shoes – never ending complaints – so and so stole my sheep

C) My neighbor snores so loud in their tent none of us can sleep –

1) Endless array of concerns

So if Moses was going to learn to live his life by what was important not by what was Urgent

A) He was going to need help – Other men – lean on and share the load with

B) That is Jethro’s advice/ you need to let other men take care of the practical things

1) the day to day things

C) You need to focus on what is your #1 calling

We see a similar situation in Acts 6 in the beginning Stages of the 1st Century Church

A) Arose a dispute: Food service – the Hellenist Widows were feeling left out –

B) Not cared for properly – Recall that? – Complaint was brought to the apostles

C)This could have derailed the whole church

D)But The apostles knew what their main calling and responsibility was – Word and Prayer

The Apostles said: You need to pick 7 men who can oversee this –

A)Because we need to devote ourselves to the word and prayer

B)It wasn't that the Apostles were too good to wait on tables or serve practically

C)But they wisely realized that if we give in to taking care of this need –

1)Our primary calling will be neglected

D)And I think they also realized that if they started trying to attend to all the practical needs

1)The list would be never ending –

E)So they decided to share the load!

It is essential that we all know what are #1 priorities are supposed to be – What Called to in every season

**A)Mentor Sharp shooter vs Shotgun blast
Little dents or big impact**

B)The Lord has led our Church focus: Church planting – and coming alongside church planters

C)Every year 100's of request – Help us build an orphanage, a well, this cause – that cause

D)The Lord has made it clear: Church planters – coming along side Churches – Guatemala team

Tyler Bacquet in Pismo Beach

A)Churches in Italy, Churches in NZ - helped Churches in NJ hood – Santa Ana

B)Every week I am on the phone with at least one pastor – struggling with issues – advice

1)Part of our calling and focus

C)So When these other request come. –Important request – Orphanage/ Wells – A cause

1)Not saying that helping church planters is more important than building a well in Africa

D)But the Lord made it clear early on – Can't do everything! – Sharp shooters – YOUR FOCUS

So when those other request come – we Pray about them add them to a list – end of the year surplus

A)Blessed to be a blessing.... Pray through the needs

B)Our Priority has been Here VISTA frist – Church planters and coming alongside churches 2nd

C)If we didn't do that -we would just constantly be responding to the Urgent –10's of thousands of needs

Notice the type of men that Moses is to pick: Points to 3 things V.21

- 1st Men of Competence
- 2nd Men of Character
- 3rd Men of Capacity

Men of Competence

A)**Able men**:– They men who are willing to serve,

B)Men who have TIME to be overseers.
Men who had the Ability to oversee

C)Heart for people – Patient -

D)So first Able: Are they available – right heart

2nd Men of Character

A)**Fear God**- Healthy respect for the Lord

B)**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom – the fear of man is a snare.**

C)A good leader can't be a man pleaser: Too many opinions – Can't please everyone

D)Have to walk in the Fear of the Lord! – Audience of ONE– That what God says matters Most

The 2nd Character trait goes hand in hand with the 1st ONE IS Men of truth – two fold –

A)Men who love the truth of God's Word

B)Walking in the Fear of the Lord means: Being led by the Word of God – **not popular opinion**

C)But Men of truth also refers to Men of integrity –

D)Their word can be trusted
1)No deceit or deception

3RD Men who Hate Covetousness:

A) **Covetousness**: is a restless inward desire to have what has been given to someone else.

B)It is a grasping desire that says: I need what they have in order to be satisfied

C) Being covetous is rooted in discontentment

Covetousness is the often the seed that leads other sins like envy, greed, resentment

A)Hating Covetousness - Describes a leader who is not driven by money or greed

B)Not someone who can be Swayed or bribed by money or influence

C)Seen Churches where people with means have incredible influence over leadership – Sad/ wrong

Here at our church: I don't know who gives and who doesn't.

A) No one on our leadership team accept our accountant – knows who gives here.

B) Contrast with Sonrise: Monday letter – how sad

C) That is Manipulative – Wrong

This passage is reminding us that Character is VERY important to God

A) Think about this: When the apostles were instructing the early church of their need to select 7 men to serve tables

B) 1ST - DEACONS Table servers and busboys – essentially – be in charge of the distribution of food.

C) Doesn't seem like an overly Spiritual job – like anyone could do that right?

This was the Criteria they said to look for: All about Character ³ Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. Act 6:3

A) Men of Good reputation – good character

B) **Full of the Holy Spirit** – Baptized by the Spirit – sensitive to the Spirit and led by the Holy Spirit

C) **Men of Wisdom** – Knowledge applied

MY PT. These men who were chosen to serve in a very practical way in the church

A) Were to be Spiritual men with a good character and good reputation -

B) Too often in the church today men of charisma are chosen over men of Character –

C) Exodus 18 and Acts 6 reverse that idea

1) CHARACTER is way more important to God than Charisma

1st Men of Competence

2nd Men of Character

3rd Men of Capacity

Place *such* over them *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times.

A) Some of these men were high capacity leaders – they could oversee 1000's – **rare group.**

B) High Capacity leaders can handle a lot – Oversee larger groups – less hands on.

1) Great at setting vision, delegating, training
Empowering and involving others

C) they don't need to be involved in every task

1) Good Problem solvers

So the High Capacity guys were set over 1,000's

A) Others 100's – Some 50's and others 10's

B) I love this because it reminds us that the way God has designed his body – Differences – Diversity

C) We are not all created the same – wired the same or gifted in the same way.

In the Kingdom of God there are leaders:

A) Leaders Cast Vision – raise up people – empower people.

B) There are also Managers – those who take a vision from a leader and put legs on it

C) A leader points the way: A manager – charts the Course

1) Doers: They are the ones **who build the road.**

Different Capacities Some over 1000's

A) But then there are others who have been wired by God to be very hands on – very relational

B) Awesome with smaller groups like 10
Great shepherds heart

C) Those who are over the 100's and the 50's will be somewhere in the middle of those two groups

1) **Not capacity of the 1000's – probably not as relational as the guy with 10**

C) The Beauty of the Body of Christ – Family of God

D) A Unity: All pulling in the same direction – same goals – Gospel – Kingdom

1) But a Diversity in how those gifts are expressed.

E) So Jethro advises Moses to build a Structure

²⁴ So Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. ²⁵ And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²⁶ So they judged the people at all times; the hard cases they brought to Moses, but they judged every small case themselves.

²⁷ Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way to his own land.

Now Numbers 11 tells us that Moses selected 70 men and these men became the Elders –

A) They were the Leadership team with Moses - To Care for the People of Israel.

B) This picture here in Exodus 18 has been instrumental in forming the way our church operates

C) Moses Model: Pre- Exodus 18 – Moses did everything governed everything –

1) Everything ran through him

D) Only accountable to God!

The Moses model of Leadership has been highly criticized in the church world today.

A)Breeding ground for Narcissistic leaders – where everything revolves around them – run through them

B)The Narcissistic leader isn't accountable to anyone

C)They are the Face and the Voice of the Church.

D)Some guys are talented enough and charismatic enough to pull that off for a while.

That is not the way I have chose to lead this church over the last 30 years.

A))From Day one I sought to form a strong and healthy leadership team.

B)Surround myself with Godly men, men of Character- men of truth – Wisdom

1)Competent men -Able and willing to serve

C)Men of Capacity – different gifts

1)Men I could be connected with and accountable to

So The Leadership team at our church is made of up men who represent – Church Elders, - Picture up

A)As the Lead Pastor I am the Head Elder of this team. - Which means – Most Responsibility

B)I am not the most important – but I will one day have to answer to Jesus the most

C)How we stewarded this responsibility.

D)For that reason we don't take this calling lightly at all. Very Serious

The term Elder in the Bible refers to one who oversees

A)They Oversee at a 30k foot view of the church

B)Pay attention to the budget – direction Systems and Structures

C)They help Expand my vision

For that reason since the beginning:

A)We have sought to have a leadership team that representative to every aspect of our Church

B)There are men on our team who are empty nesters – relate to that group.

C)Men who serve in Men's ministry, Men who's wives are involved in women's ministry

D)Men who have kids in Youth ministry and Children's ministry

E)Men who have served in those ministries here

Men who are involved in Missions/ worship

A) These men help me discern what is the pulse of the church – the needs in the church

B) God uses them to help me see what I am missing –
I can talk to one group – Fine

1) No people I am talking to are concerned or stressed

C) As Elders they also meet with people counsel,
disciple – care for the Body

How does someone become a part of this team?

A) Three year terms: One year off – eligible to return
if there is a need in that spot they would fill

B) Vacancy – Send me names: I look for reoccurring
names

C) Bring those names up at a meeting – Vetted

D) There should never be the reaction from the body
of that guy? Really? – Head Scratch

1) Should always be – THAT GUY – perfect sense

So once someone has been Vetted – then I will approach them – lay out commitments

A) Role – responsibilities – to discern – are they Able
to serve in this way.

B) So the first layer of leadership in our structure is
the leadership team – 8-12 men – 30k foot view

Our Pastors are Also Elders

A) The Pastoral team is more involved in the day to
day ministry of the church – handling needs

B) Overseeing different aspects of ministry here

C) Some of our pastors are on the Leadership team
and most are not – BALANCE

The Leadership team sets Vision – the Pastors and staff become the Managers help – put legs on vision

A) As it relates to their area of Oversight – Aaron
YA/ Philip and Charlie – Youth

B) Jesse with Marriage and Family – Jamie with
Children's ministry

C) Steve with Men's ministry and along with Eddie
Finances

1) – Mike with Spanish – Rob Nash with missions –

D) So that is how our structure is set up – Each
Pastor and leader – Different capacity of oversight

So we see this example in Exodus Moses picks 70 men

A) Example in Acts 6 – 7 men for a Specific task

B) Before we go look at one last thing Eph 4

The Goal of the Church Ephesians 4:11-12

¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

There in Eph. 4 Paul the apostles lays out that the goal of the church is to help everyone in the church

A) To Discover who they are in Christ – what their place is in the body – **Harrison jr. high – parking**

B) To Equip everyone to do the work of the Ministry

C) Everyone Growing together – being building up and everyone serving in some capacity

¹⁶ **from whom the whole body**, joined and knit together by what **every joint supplies**, according to the effective working by which **every part does its share**, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

And I was talking with our staff the other day of how amazing it is that we have a large team of volunteers

A) Huge like 40% of the Body here serves in some capacity. Most churches 8-10%

B) We are at 40% - But this is what I told our team – We can and should rejoice in that – Awesome

C) But we are not Satisfied with that – because the Goal according to Eph 4 is 100%

100% of you knowing who you are in Christ and what is your role in the body of Christ

A) Young moms – your kids

B) Others aging parent or spouse – Not Able

C) But for a lot of us – You need to figure that out

1) Discover your gift your place – your function

D) Your capacity – Start making an impact

Imagine the impact we could make in Vista and around the world – if everyone served

A) In some capacity – if everyone gave –

B) I am not saying that to put any pressure on anyone – please understand that –

C) But only to say: Imagine the impact – imagine how powerful – it would be

1) All using our gifts, talents, resources – for God's kingdom

Paul said in Col 1:27 – The Goal - To present every man and woman – Complete – Mature in Christ.

A) We Labor and strive to that end.

B) My goal too – Labor to that end – Amen

