



EXODUS

TRIUMPH OF GRACE

EXODUS - WEEK 16

How God Teaches Us to Trust

Opening prayer

Prayer for the persecuted church:

Prayer for a local church:

This morning we pray for our brothers Ryan Sharp and Jeff Johnson at Impact Church.

Closing prayer

Introduction:

In the story of the Exodus so far, we find that God delivered the nation of Israel from the bondage of the Pharaoh by the ten plagues displaying His judgment, culminating in the

final plague of killing all the first born in the homes of those who didn't have the blood of a lamb marked over their doorposts and then He parted the sea as they fled and drowned their enemies and finally taking the nation of Israel into the wilderness where God gives them the law. That's where we are in this saga. We're moving to the place of God's law. God's will is His law. God's law is His will.

Proverbs 29:18

**18 Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint,
but blessed is he who keeps the law.**

Theme:

Philippians 2:14-15

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

Exodus 16:1-3

16 They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin,

Now they're in the wilderness and what we're going to find is that in the journey they are on God shows us the pattern of the Christian life. They are in bondage. God delivers them by the blood of the lamb. They are free, but then

He takes them into the wilderness to teach them how to trust God. Spiritual growth happens in the wilderness.

which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt.² And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness,³ and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat

by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

They had been saved. They had been delivered from the bondage of slavery, but now they wished themselves dead, because of their present circumstances.

1. Grumbling reveals our hearts.

In bad times we think fondly of the good times even when those good times were in bad circumstances. What's the problem with that? Our recollection is generally skewed. It's what some call selective memory. Their perspective was off. They weren't actually starving. They had herds of cattle, so they could drink milk or make cheese or even eat meat. “Sometimes we mistake our greeds for our needs.” (Philip Ryken)

They had been saved by the hand of God, but after they were saved they became dissatisfied. What does this tell us about grumbling?

Exodus 16:3

3 and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

They would rather be in bondage and die than be saved by God and be led by Him into the wilderness. It simply reveals ungrateful and distrustful hearts.

Philippians 2:14-15

¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing, ¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted

generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

When we become Christians, we are delivered from the twisted and crooked domain of darkness. Because Christ died for all our sins we are children of God without blemish. That is our position in Christ spiritually. That is your new identity, your new man, if you're a Christian. But we are also in this world, this crooked and twisted generation, which can tempt us to complain and grumble instead of

trusting in God's goodness and sovereignty.
That's what happened to the children of Israel.

Exodus 16:4

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.

2. God answers our grumbling with testing.

The answer to their grumbling request was a test. Why? So that you'll be able to answer this question with conviction: Do your circumstances tell you the truth about yourself or does God tell you the truth about yourself? This is not about denying reality it's about trusting God rather than circumstances. Here's the thing – all our discontentment and dissatisfaction with ourselves or our

circumstances is ultimately directed at God. Is God not sovereign over your life?

- Wheaton vs. TCU

Then you're never in a situation He hasn't decided to put you in. "A complaining spirit always indicates a problem in our relationship with God." (Philip Ryken)

Exodus 16:5-6

5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” 6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt,

God does all things for His own glory.

Let me explain the glory of God by using John Piper’s biblical definition of sin, which is the opposite of God’s glory.

“What makes sin sin is not first that it hurts people, but that it blasphemes God. This is the ultimate evil and the ultimate outrage in the universe.

The glory of God is not honored.

The holiness of God is not reverenced.

The greatness of God is not admired.

The power of God is not praised.

The truth of God is not sought.

The wisdom of God is not esteemed.

The beauty of God is not treasured.

The goodness of God is not savored.

The faithfulness of God is not trusted.
The promises of God are not relied upon.
The commandments of God are not obeyed.
The justice of God is not respected.
The wrath of God is not feared.
The grace of God is not cherished.
The presence of God is not prized.
The person of God is not loved.

“The infinite, all-glorious Creator of the universe, by whom and for whom all things exist (Rom. 11:36) – who holds every person’s life in being at every moment (Acts 17:25) – is

disregarded, disbelieved, disobeyed, and dishonored by everybody in the world. That is the ultimate outrage of the universe.”

And after all that, after how we ourselves have dishonored, disobeyed and disregarded God, He loved us in such a way that He Himself died for our sins which mar His glory. That’s why the Scripture says the kindness of God leads us to repentance.

“If we are not giving God the glory, after all He has done for us, what more is it going to take?” (Philip Ryken)

When we trust what God says, we will see God’s will work out in our lives. God fulfills His Word. He backs up His promises. That’s what He’s teaching us in the wilderness.

But the Israelites had to be tested so that they would see that they could trust God in spite of their circumstances. They had to see that God

will do what He promises to do. And the only way they begin to see that was trusting Him in these circumstances. Where? In the wilderness. Most of the Christian life is lived in the wilderness.

The Exodus shows us the pattern of the Christian life. Just as God saved them from the bondage of Egypt by the blood of the Lamb, He has saved us from the bondage of sin by the blood of the Lamb. They were saved, but God took them to the wilderness to

test them to show them He could be trusted. The test wasn't so God could see if they were trustworthy.

**3. The test was so they could see
that God is trustworthy.**

It's the same for us.

Exodus 16:7

7 and in the morning (after you've trusted God, not before) you shall see the glory of the Lord,

After we trust God, then we see Him follow through. But this is about learning to trust the nature and character of God, to see God as our greatest treasure aside even from the blessings He gives us. So many people spend their lives searching for ways to get God to bless them rather than searching for God Himself. The blessing is not the treasure. God Himself is the treasure.

Sometimes we want God to do something for us and when that thing is not accomplished or if it doesn't happen according to our timetable, then we become angry with God. Why? Because we're seeking the blessing and not the Blesser.

This just shows us we do not yet trust His character. We want Him to do things that we want. Our grumbling reveals our hearts. Sometimes these are even good things that

we desire, but God is refining our motives along with everything else. But more than anything He is showing us He can be trusted because of Who He is.

He's refining our motives, because there can be different motives for trusting God for the same thing, say someone's salvation for example. We can ask God to save someone because it would make our relationship with them better. But that's not the same as asking

God to save them because they dishonor Him with their lives.

Sometimes we ask God to save someone and when they don't get saved according to our timeline, we get angry with God. Somehow we place no blame on the person who's rebellion against God and dishonoring Him with their lives, which shows us our motives are not focused on God's glory and honor, but upon our own desires. You see, there's a lot of refining going on in our lives, isn't there? This

is why most of the Christian life is lived in the wilderness. We are slow to trust God the way He deserves to be trusted.

because he has heard your grumbling against the Lord. For what are we, that you grumble against us?"

Their grumbling was really against the Lord. Why? Let's put it simply. God revealed His will to them, but they wanted something more.

Sometimes we mistake our greeds for our needs.

The other issue was that the Lord placed Moses as their leader and then by His grace He made them part of the flock which Moses led. In essence, what they were really saying is, “Lord, we don’t like how you’re handling things. We think things should go this way.”

What’s the issue? The issue is really one of being ignorant of God’s will. When people are

ignorant of God's will they cast off restraint. They take over and lead themselves. And the issue of not trusting the will of God is an issue of not knowing God.

4. Grumblers always finds someone to blame. Faith always finds a promise to claim.

Grumblers find someone to take out their frustrations on. Psychologists call this displaced anger. Grumblers angry about

something. They can't quite put their finger on it, but they know exactly who to blame. If I can't find something, if I'm frustrated, it's generally my wife's fault.

Exodus 16:8-9

8 And Moses said, “When the Lord gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the Lord has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him —what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the Lord.”

This is a leader's proper view of their role — what are we? We're just pointing you to Him, the One you can trust. You have to trust Him in your circumstances, not us. What are we?

⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling.’”

This shows the kindness of God's heart. He listened to their grumbling. And He answered them. When our children are being disciplined and they say things like, "You're don't really care about me. You're just being mean," we know it's because of their immaturity. They don't see things the way we do, because they're children. They can't see everything we have done or will do for them because we love them so much.

Well, aren't we so often just like immature little children saying to God, "You don't really care about me. You're awfully far away and cold." We're too immature to see how He has demonstrated His love for us in Christ's death in our place. We're too immature to trust Him when things turn sour.

5. When we don't see circumstances through the gospel we grumble and complain.

Exodus 16:10-15

¹⁰ And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.

This is the Shekinah glory of God they're seeing, the manifest presence of God in a cloud.

¹¹ And the Lord said to Moses, ¹² “I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to

them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’”

God answered their grumbling request so they could see His glory, so that they would trust Him.

13 In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. 14 And when the dew had gone up,

there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵ **When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.**

God gave them bread to eat, the bread of heaven. Every morning we get up ungrateful or complaining or grumbling about something, it's because we fail to see the

bread of heaven God has given us. We fail to see our circumstances through the gospel. When we don't see circumstances through the gospel we grumble and complain.

- Communion

John 6:35

35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

John 6:47-51

47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Jesus was saying that He is like this manna that sustained their lives physically. He does the same thing for us spiritually when we place our trust in Him.

We can get up in the morning and look at the grass outside our windows and remember the manna that God gave the Israelites on the grass, this bread of heaven, was just foreshadowing Jesus, the bread of heaven who satisfies our spiritual hunger for truth, to know the will of God.

I am no longer on a search to discover if there is any truth in the universe. I know the Truth, Jesus Christ who said He is the Truth. Now, I search to have understanding so I can know Him better and live life in an understanding way so I can learn to trust Him unreservedly.

It can end here.

Exodus 16:16-21

**16 This is what the Lord has commanded:
‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he
can eat.**

How much of Christ do you want? You can have as much of Jesus as you desire. And that is the struggle of the Christian life, to understand how our old person, the person we were in Adam, has been crucified with Christ, and how to live life where we are now, as new creations in Christ. If you're trying to put your old self to death, realize that's crazy

because Scripture tells you that your old self was crucified with Christ. Your old self is already dead. You're new in Christ. How do you put to death someone who's already been crucified?

You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.” ¹⁷ And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less. ¹⁸ But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and

whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat. ¹⁹ And Moses said to them, “Let no one leave any of it over till the morning.” ²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses. Some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them.

They had clear instructions. It was complicated. They just didn't listen, because they didn't trust in God's leadership. They trusted their own leadership more. They didn't

really trust that God would take care of them the next day.

21 Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

I have two relationships with my wife. One is the accumulative relationship of all the years we've been together, which hopefully produces some security as to what she might expect of me tomorrow morning.

But the other relationship is the one I have with her today. I can't just rely on the accumulative effect if I want our relationship to continue to be healthy and loving. I have to have a relationship with her today, too. I have to interact with her today. I have to find out her will today.