DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE

<u>TEXT SUMMARY</u>

In this week's text, <u>Exodus 33</u>, we see the aftermath of Israel's catastrophic disobedience (their worship of the golden calf):

- Yahweh declares that He will not go with the people, lest He destroy them in His wrath (v. 1-6).
- Moses forms the habit of meeting with Yahweh in the Tent of Meeting (v. 7-10).
- Moses intercedes with Yahweh on behalf of the people (v. 11-17).
- Moses asks to see the face of Yahweh (v. 18-23).

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- 1. If Yahweh doesn't go with the people to the Land, whom will He send to defeat their enemies?
- 2. How do the people respond when they hear that Yahweh will not go with them?
- 3. What do the people "who sought the Lord" (v. 7) do when Moses goes to meet with Yahweh in the Tent of Meeting?
- 4. What does Yahweh say in response to Moses' request to see His ways?
- 5. What does Yahweh say in response to Moses' request to see His glory?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

- There is a tension in this text. In v. 11 we are told that Yahweh "used to speak to Moses face to face, as with a friend." Then in v. 20 Yahweh tells Moses, "You cannot see my face." How can this tension be resolved?
- Centuries later, on the night before He dies, one of Jesus' disciples, like Moses, must have felt his confidence slipping away. He asks Jesus a question similar to Moses' request: "Show us the Father, and it is enough for us" (John 14:8). How does Jesus answer Philip's request? (This is wonderful.)

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SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

1. The events of this chapter take place in the shadow of a national calamity. There has been spiritual trauma: the people have committed "spiritual adultery" at the very moment Yahweh was establishing His covenant with them on Sinai. There is the **bereavement**: the families of 3000 Hebrews are grieving the death of loved ones who rebelled against Yahweh and were slain by the swords of the Levites. And on top of all that, the **displacement**: after all the drama of Yahweh's appearance on Sinai, after the people's sordid rebellion, after that rebellion is violently suppressed, the people are instructed to strike camp and move on, but now without Yahweh going with them. No wonder they are distressed.

Have you ever rebelled against God in such a shameful and humiliating way that you didn't know how to move forward?

- What means did God use to reprove and restore you after your utter failure (His Word, the inner working of His Spirit, His people, etc.)
- Has God ever used you to encourage and support someone else in that situation of debilitating shame? What did you say and/or do to encourage your devastated brother or sister?
- 2. Our spiritual forebears were right to be distressed at the idea of having to move on without the Presence of Yahweh. In our day, we can enjoy the Presence of God in a way that would have been inconceivable to the ancient Hebrews: the Spirit was poured out on the Church and from that moment indwells His people. Now He is patiently at work in and among His people, bending the trajectory of our lives toward holiness. Usually, His work is slow and methodical; He's always playing the long game in our lives. How have you seen God's Spirit shape your inner life your priorities, your inner sense of self, your moral instincts over the years you've walked with God?

