

“A Gift in the Wilderness”

Small Group Discussion

Exodus 16, part 2

Begin with prayer. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you all through God's word, and to lead your discussion.

Opening Questions (try to get everyone involved in discussion):

- During the COVID-19 shutdown, has life felt more restful for you, or more hectic? Why?
- Today we continue to look at the wilderness period in Israel's history, with the understanding that God sometimes takes us into the “wilderness” to teach us vital, practical truths.

Read Exodus 16:17-30, then discuss the following.

- Twice in this passage, the Israelites disobey the Lord's instructions. Why do you think that they do this?
- Why did God change the instructions for day 6?
- Thinking of the Israelites' most recent experience in Egypt, how often were they allowed to rest?
- What do you think God was trying to teach his people prior to their reaching the Promised Land? (Let people summarize in their own words first. Pastor Josh's wording: “In the wilderness, God teaches us to rest I his care.”)
 - In what way would this lesson serve God's people well when they got to the Promised Land?
 - Why did they go out to look for manna on the seventh day?
- Read these passages, and summarize what insights they give us into the Sabbath principle:
 - Gen 2:1-3
 - Exodus 20:8-11
 - Deut. 5:12-15
 - Mark 2:23-28
- In what way did the Sabbath commandment point forward to what Jesus would do? How is he the ultimate fulfillment of the Sabbath?
- In light of what Jesus has accomplished, to what degree do you think it is still wise and/or necessary to observe one full day of rest every week?
- What does God teach us by having us rest one day every week? (If you have practiced Sabbath consistently, share from your own experience of how God has taught you through it).
- Invite each group member to share about if and how they practice Sabbath. If they do not take a day of rest each week, what keeps them from it? If they do, what are some practical ways that they make it a special day?
- On Sunday, Josh said, “God gives us permission to put parameters around our work and block out time to rest.” What is your honest reaction when you hear that sentence? What would you have to change practically to make it a reality?
- Specifically in this pandemic time, what might a Sabbath practice look like for you? How could it benefit you now especially?

PRAYER: Share about your current needs and struggles, and spend some time praying for one another.