

EXODUS: From Slavery to Service. These sermons were preached during the ministry of Rev. Mike Jones. Inspiration and information was drawn from a variety of sources.

A DOUBLE LOOK- EXODUS 12:1-2, 14

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THE SERMON GOD PREACHED

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A DOUBLE LOOK- Exodus 12:1-2, 14

My glasses are curved so that many times I can look in the corner of them and see what's behind me as well as look ahead. As we "close the books on 1988" and begin a new year I want us to take this kind of a "double look" at where we are- Looking back at where we've come from and looking ahead to where we're going. This type of review and rededication is a good practice; and one used throughout the Bible. It's also a good time to examine our personal relationships with each other and with the Lord and make any necessary corrections.

A TIME OF REFLECTION on the Year's:

- A) Accomplishments-
- B) Anguishes- Deaths, Disease, "Disasters"

A TIME OF REACHING FORTH TO NEW GOALS:

A TIME OF RENEWAL AND REDEDICATION:

- A) Committed to Church work-
- B) Committed to Christ- Deeper Love and Devotion, Greater Service to Him and others.

In today's scripture, God delivered His People from Egypt by the Blood and then sent them on a journey to the Promised Land. They faced Battles; had to be educated in God's law at Mt Sinai; and learned to live by Faith in God's Provisions. God wants to do the same for you today- He wants to deliver you from bondage and give you what your heart craves: There are 3 things every man needs:

1. Significance- meaning to life Purpose
2. Satisfaction- Peace
3. Security- Protection

Each of these is found in accepting Christ as Savior and Serving Him with your life. A Place in the Body of Christ, Peace with God and the Peace OF God; and God's Protection now and to come.

Why don't you begin the new year with a New Birth???

PASSOVER: Protection and Deliverance- Exodus 12:1-14 21-28

Soon we will celebrate Communion, "The Lord's Supper". This is a memorial celebrating the Suffering and Sacrifice that Christ made so that we might have eternal life. It is one of the most sacred and holy privileges of the Christian Church and you should lift praise to God for His allowing you to be here today for this memorial.

The original "Lord's Supper" was held by Jesus the night before he was betrayed and crucified and was a celebration of the Jewish Passover. It is important for us to realize the meaning of the Passover if we are to fully understand the "Lord's Supper" so I want us to look at 4 words that describe the need of and blessing from the Passover:

1. **PROBLEMS:** During a time of famine the nation of Israel (numbering only 70 souls at the time) came to dwell in Egypt under the direction and protection of Joseph. As long as Joseph and those who knew him lived the Israelites were protected and honored BUT there came a day when this protection was lost and the Israelites became little more than slaves. Their labors were for the benefit of another master, their lives were full of pain and punishment, and their children were being killed by their masters---What a picture of what sin does in a person's life!!

Finally the problems became so heavy until the people continually cried out to God for deliverance and God raised up a man to stand for them--A man with a miraculous birth, who could have been king but was instead a shepherd, and who used signs and sermons to bring the people to deliverance (How much like Jesus Moses was!).

2. **PLAGUES:** In order to gain attention, Moses used Plagues upon the nation of Egypt. Each of the plagues was designed to show that God was greater than the gods of Egypt and to instill faith in the children of Israel that God could and would deliver them. In much the same way today the Lord allows troubles and tribulations to come our way to show us the error of trusting in flesh and human reasoning. Some people, like Pharaoh, allow this to harden their heart instead of draw them to God. Others realize that something must be done and cry out for final deliverance.

3. **PASSOVER:** Conviction was not enough; God was looking for Conversion!! and that could only come through shed blood. So God instituted the Passover feast at which the blood of a lamb was applied to the door of the house providing a sign so that the death angel would "passover" that house (Just at the blood of Christ applied to our hearts today provides payment for the wages of sin).

This Passover was a MEAL and a MEMORIAL just as the "Lord's Supper" is today.

4. **PROMISED LAND:** This was the beginning of years and the beginning of a new life for the nation of Israel. From this night they would be a delivered people headed to the Promised Land; slaves no more!!

Great things happen when the Blood is applied: You escape DEATH, You get a new DESTINATION, and you are DELIVERED to a new Life. Is the Blood applied on the "Door" of your heart today?? Communion is for Christians, are you one??

APART- Exo 13:12

Part of the wonder Christianity is its TOGETHERNESS. It brings sinners together with God and changes them into Saints. It's brings people from varying background together and forms the Body of Christ. It's great to be part of this togetherness. I especially like the way Paul describes how we were brought together in Christ- *That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* -- Eph 2:12-13

But there is also a place in Christianity for SEPARATION. And that's what I want to look at today. I want to use as a topic the word "Apart. It means- to separate, to put at a distance; and the scriptures verses where the word is found tell us some of the need and benefits of Separation in the Christian life.

I. CONSECRATION:

A. Dedicate our Bodies: *thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S* (Exo 13:12). The first fruits of our life should be set aside as an offering to the Lord. A good rule to follow is to Give God the First part of your day, the first part of your pay, and the first say in your life.

B. Isolate our Prayers: *And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone.* (Mat 14:23) Prayer Closets should be a normal part of Christian life. God can hear you with the TV going but it's difficult for you to hear Him!

C. Separate our Devotion: *And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,* (Matt 17:1). In this place of Separation these Disciples saw Jesus Transfigured before their eyes and heard the Voice of God. Maybe the reason our eyes are so dim and our ears so dull of hearing is because we never get to a place God can deal with us.

God calls us to "Come Apart" and be Holy for He is Holy. The Power and Holiness in your Christian Life are in direct proportion to the time you spend in communion with God.

II. CONTAMINATION: *And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even* (Lev 15:19).

We isolate people with disease from healthy people lest they catch their sickness (This particular problem was more moral than medical but the principle is relevant). The Bible is also clear on the Christian remaining separate from the world and it's contaminating influence.

If you play in the mud, you're going to get dirty. Our garments are white, let's avoid anything that would dirty them.

III. CARE: *But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him* (Psa 4:3). This is the separation of a Prized Possession (Like China dishes you put in the China Cabinet. You use the paper plates normally and the China when special company comes).

What a special joy to know that God values me enough to Discipline me when I need it (Heb 12:-) while at the same time holding me in His Hand, protected from anything Satan can throw at me.

IV. SORROW- *And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;* (Zec 12:12)

When Jesus heard of it (John the Baptist's death), *he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities* (Matt 14:13). There are times that Sorrow needs company and times it needs Separation- Blessed is the man that knows the difference (We condemn "Job's Friends" but they at least knew enough to sit with him quietly until he was ready to speak).

V. CONFIDENCE- When the Disciples failed to help the demon possessed boy they *came to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?* (Mat 17:19). They wanted to find the reasons for their failure in a private session. One of the "missing ingredients" in life today is people taking the time to share burdens with one another. Everyone, even Jesus, feels the need to talk in confidence with close friends- *And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,* (Mat 20:17)

VI. VACATION: *And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat* (Mark 6:31). Vance Havner says we either come apart or come A Part! Everyone needs time to Rest, Reflect, and Recharge.

VII. COMMITMENT: *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls* (James 1:21).

It's not enough to be separate FROM sin; we must be Separated UNTO God. Separation FROM Sin is called Repentance. Separation UNTO God is by Faith and leads to Salvation.

Are you Apart from God today? Come to Christ and become a part of the Body of Christ with the Blessed Hope of His soon return.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH- Exodus 14:13-22

God has delivered the Children of Israel from the Bondage of Egypt by a series of miracles that ended in the applied blood of Passover. Now, He is going to develop them as people- After forgiveness comes the life of Faith.

This Faith is not "wishful thinking" it is *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Heb 11:1). It is a feeling of confidence in God's Plan and God's Power.

God develops the Children of Israel by leading them into an impossible situation. He did this in order to:

- 1) Increase the Faith of the Israelites
- 2) Show the Egyptians (and the world) that He was God.
- 3) Display the ingredients of a Victorious Faith.

I. A VICTORIOUS FAITH IS GREATER THAN ANY FEAR- Exo 14:13 *And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.*

There are 366 "fear nots" in the Bible- one for every day; even leap year. Sometimes God brings us face to face with our fears so that we might learn how silly they really are.

II. A VICTORIOUS FAITH STANDS STILL AND TRUSTS GOD TO WORK BUT IS READY TO WORK WHEN GOD SAYS WORK- Exo 14:14-16 *The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. 15 And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: 16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.*

You must learn that you cannot DEFEAT the Enemy or BRIDGE the Red Sea so you wait patiently on God to show you His escape path (and God WILL make a way of escape!).

When God shows you the way out of the Trap then He expects you to do your part- Within a Pit I cannot escape but when God reaches down for me I reach up for Him (Example of the Man who drown waiting for God to save him even though God had sent a car, a boat, and a helicopter).

III. A VICTORIOUS FAITH STEPS OUT ON THE IMPOSSIBLE- Exo 14:21 *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.* You don't tempt God but you do Trust Him enough to act "Foolishly" based on confidence in His Word.

IV. A VICTORIOUS FAITH ENDURES TO THE END TO COMPLETE IT'S TASK- Exo 14:22 *And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.* Don't stop in the Middle of the Sea, Keep on walking.

A Victorious Faith sees an Obstacle as an Opportunity. Thus it:

- 1) Honors God
- 2) Delivers God's People
- 3) Defeats the Powers of darkness

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4).

BITTERNESS Ex. 15:23-25

While in Nashville Paula and I went to a fancy restaurant and for desert I ordered a Vandermint Ice Cream-not knowing that it was Ice Cream with Liquor poured over it!! When I tasted it I found that the sweet was in fact bitter!! Life sometimes treats us that way. We think that everything will work great and, like the children of Israel, we find trouble and trial instead of triumph. Let's look at why this is, what happens as a result, and how to cure it.

I. CAUSES OF BITTERNESS

A) Lose of Family and Fortune-Naomi in Ruth 1:20-21 said to change her name to Mara (Bitterness) because of lose of husband and sons.

B) Sin- The Children of Israel were in Bitter Bondage in Egypt (Sin) and had to eat Bitter herbs (Ex 12:8) as they left to signify the bitterness of sin. (Just as Jesus was given vinegar to drink)

C) Envy- Simon the Magician in Acts 8:14-24 envied the Power of the Apostles and tried to buy it and Peter said he was in the "gall of bitterness". Envy is a green-eyed monster!!

D) Death- Agag the king thought he had escaped the "bitterness of death" (I Sam 15:32) when Saul sinned but Samuel corrected that.

Ecc. 7:26 I find more bitter than death the woman.

Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them. Prov 17:25 A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitter-ness to her that bare him.

II. RESULTS OF BITTERNESS

A) Many others defiled- Heb 12:14-16 *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*

B) Nursed into Bitter Life-Prov 14:10 (Contrasting Proverb)*The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doeth not intermeddle with his joy.*

C) Makes us backslide- Jam 3:14 *If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.* This wisdom descends not from above but is sensual Devilish

III. CURES FOR BITTERNESS

A) The Cross of Christ- Tree in Text

B) Power of the Holy Spirit- Ep 4:31-32 *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ sake hath forgiven you.*

ARE YOU NURSING A BITTER SPIRIT??

ARE YOU MAKING THINGS MISERABLE FOR THOSE AROUND YOU BY YOUR BITTERNESS

ARE YOU BITTER ABOUT YOUR LOT IN LIFE?? COME TO CHRIST

MANNA MIRACLE- Exodus 16:13-24

MANNA'S NAME- "What is it?" Exo 16:31 *And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.*

Num 11:6-7 *But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes. And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium*

MANNA'S SOURCE- The Lord Gave Psa 78:24 *And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven*

Exo 16:14-21 *And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. 15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat. 16 This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. 17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. 18 And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. 19 And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. 20 Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them. 21 And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.*

Num 11:9 *And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.*

Neh 9:20 *Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.*

MANNA'S REASON: Exo 16:4-5 *Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.*

Deu 8:16 *Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;*

1) Necessary Food- Also had quail, sheep, wheat, and purchased food. but this was something that showed them God's love and provision daily.

2) Test of Faith- Only enough for one day, Teach Trust in God

3) Test of Obedience- Each day is a new task

4) Teach Trust in God's Word above Human resources- Deu 8:3 *And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*

MANNA'S CONCLUSION- Josh 5:12 *And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*

MEMORIAL MANNA: Heb 9:4 *Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; LIVING BREAD IS CHRIST: John 6:58 *This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.**

HIDDEN MANNA: Rev 2:17 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

God's Guidelines for Every Generation- Exo 20:1-17

Many many things change in life- births, deaths, marriages, divorces; yet the one thing that remains constant is God- *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever* (Heb 13:8). That's why He is often referred to as the "Rock". He's Strong, Stable, and Secure.

The thing we fail to realize many times, however, is that God is not only Constant in His love and care; He is also constant in His expectations and His judgment! He not only expects us to accept His love, He expects us to follow His rules.

That's what today's message is about. Most people at one time or another have learned the TEN COMMANDMENTS. Even the unsaved world takes them as a good guideline for living. But I think they're more talked than walked today; and I want us to examine them again as God's Guidelines for EVERY Generation, including this one.

I. THE SOURCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS- *And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* Note that "Lord" is in all Capitals. That means in the King James Version that it is the Hebrew word "Jehovah": the self-existent one. This is not a Passing Sermon by a local Pastor. It's the eternal word of from God who exists without our help or effort. In other words, the following is true and relevant regardless of what man thinks or does.

Note also that God gives the REASON He expects these people to follow these rules; He has delivered them from Bondage into the Blessedness of His Covenant People. The laws should be readily agreed to out of their love for Him.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

A> They cover every area of our life- They are specific enough to be easily understood and "general" enough to cover every situation.

B> They Belong together- They are individual guidelines that form a UNIT. You can not pick and choose which of them you will obey- *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* (James 2:10).

C> They cover our conduct with God and Man- The first 4 deal with man's relationship to God. The last 6 deal with Man's Relationship to other Men. Jesus said they could be summarized in two great commandments- *Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets* (Mat 22:36-40).

III. THE SENSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS

1> The Priority of God- *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* Your "god" is the thing that occupies first place in your heart. God said that place belongs to Him.

2> The Person of God- *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.* Even when God became a man we have no description of what He looked like. God does not want us to worship a form; He wants us to Love and Adore HIM (Sort of like my wife and I. While she has retained her exceptional beauty, I haven't! If she only loved my body we'd be divorced now).

3> The Pronouncements About God- *Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.* Your name is your "Personal" identification. God knows when we downgrade His name we also downgrade Him. Remember also that our prayers are made "in the name of Jesus".

4> The Privilege of Time with God- *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.* Parents have found that expensive toys don't replace time with their children. God is not looking for a brief visit a couple of times a year. He wants us to spend time getting to know and love Him EVERY Week.

5> Children Relationships- *Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.* The Home is God's first "line of defense". He expects us to honor the position held by our parents (even if the parents sometimes don't live up to their responsibilities).

6> Society Relationships- *Thou shalt not kill.* As a society we have the responsibility to protect other members of society. This means we don't kill babies, old people, or people we don't like. It also means we hold those accountable who do knowingly kill others.

7> Marriage Relationships- *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* The only place God intended Sexual Relationship to take place was in the marriage relationship. Pre-marital, extra-marital, and non-marital relationships are forbidden by God (This also includes Homosexual relationships).

8> Business Relationships- *Thou shalt not steal.* Exorbitant prices, lazy workers, taking of property; all are included here.

9> Community Relationships- *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.* The tongue is like a fire; it can burn down a neighborhood. Isn't it strange that we always seem to tear down the people closest to us??

10> Personal Relationships- *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.* This is "Paul's Sin" (Rom 7:7) and the downfall of many other people. Contentment is GREAT GAIN.

Those are the Rules. Do You need to Repent???

THE SERMON GOD PREACHED- Exodus 20:1-21

Exodus 20:1 *And God spake all these words, saying,...* Thus begins the Sermon God preached to His people Israel upon their escape from Egypt. They were changing from a nation in Bondage into a nation ruled as a THEOCRACY (Ruled by God and guided by His Word). This sermon preached by God gives the basic guidelines for the governing of the people under this new and exciting way of life.

I. GOD'S RULES FOR LIVING vs 1-17

A) The Basis of the Law vs 1-2

1. Who God is- I am the LORD (Yahweh) thy God. [LORD here literally means "the self-existent one who reveals Himself". God begins this sermon by showing that He had the RIGHT {Self-Existent One} and the REASON {Reveals Himself} to preach].

2. What God did- "Brought thee out of Egypt's Bondage". God is able to direct the people not only because of His PERSON but also because of His POWER.

B) The Basics of the Law vs 3-17 (See Mark 12:29-31)

1. Man's relationship to God

1. God is to occupy First Place in everything we do

2. God is to be worshipped in Spirit, not in Statues [Wrong concepts of God effect people for generations!!].

3. God's name must be revered (since it is the basis of our Dealing with God-- "In Jesus' Name")

4. God's Day is to be Set Apart for Fellowship and Worship.

2. Man's Relationship to Man

5. Parents are in the line of authority that comes from God. They are to be Honored (Respected) so that God can bless.

6. Murder, (7)Adultery, (8)Stealing, (9)Bearing False Witness, and (10)Wrongfully desiring another's property is condemned. [This deals with Hate, Lust, Deceit, Lying, and Coveting; all of the things that motivate men to do wrong to other men].

II. GOD RESPECTED BY THE PEOPLE vs 18-21

A) They Witnessed His Power and that produced Respect vs 18

B) They asked for a "go between" (Mediator) vs 19

C) Respectful Fear of God is a guard against sin vs 20

D) The Mediator is Hidden but working (Today circumstances, problems, and troubles hide God but He's still there!! with Christ at His right hand working for us).

God has given us Guidelines to go by and demands that we respect Him. Are you following the Rules?? Do you Reverence God?

THE SERMON GOD PREACHED

Ex 20:1 "And God spake all these words, saying,". By this message God proclaimed to these people who had just escaped from Egyptian bondage the basis of their new government. (They were to become a THEOCRATIC NATION- Ruled by God and guided by His word.)

I. GOD'S RULES FOR LIVING vs 1-17

A) The Basis of the Law

- i. Who God is- I am the Lord (Yahweh) thy God
- ii. What God did- Brought thee out of Egypt and bondage

B) The Basics of the Law (See Mark 12:29-31)

iii. Man's Relationship to God

1. God is to be ___ the first place
2. God can't be worshipped by idols (He is Spirit)
3. God's Name must be revered
4. God's Day to be Holy (set apart)

iv. Man's Relationship to Man

5. Parents are in Authority
6. Murder
7. Adultery
8. Stealing
9. Bearing False Witness
10. Wrongfully desiring another's property is condemned.

II. GOD RESPECTED BY THE PEOPLE vs 18-21

A) They witness His power 18

B) They ask for a "go between" 19

C) This respectful fear of God is a guard against sin 20

D) The people stand afar off and Moses draws near unto the thick darkness where God was (This shielded God from man: today circumstances, problems, and troubles hide God but He's still there II) GOD IS TO BE RESPECTED. This means we don't take Him or sin lightly.

III. GOD'S REQUIREMENTS FOR WORSHIP vs 22-26

A) Must be worshipped in Spirit (Spoke from Heaven. Remember they were not to make any gods of silver or gold). Being in Church does not mean you are worshipping!

B) Must be approached by Sacrifice

1. Burnt Offering (salvation) & Peace Offering (Service)).
2. Meet at Altar- Place of death for Sin and To Sin

C) Must meet at God's Place under God's conditions

1. Place where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee (You might try to worship God in a boat on Sunday but God might have other plans! I)
2. Altar must be of:
 1. Earth- whosoever will may come
 2. unhewn stone- not by works of righteousness which we have done. If you lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.
 3. Altar cannot be raised; neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon. (Man cannot reach God. God must reach man. The Spirit must draw us and we must come depending only on God's Grace.

PIERCED EARS- Exodus 21:1-6

Before I was saved I was the Servant of Sin, Satan, and Self. Now I belong to God and I love to serve Him- I didn't lose joy, I found abundant life! I want to look today at a man who made such a life changing decision and see how we need to make the same decision.

Let's begin with an Object Lesson- Jesus said many times that men have "eyes to see and yet see not". He was stating a Spiritual principle but it works in the physical world as well- Without looking, can you tell me what color tie your husband or father is wearing? If your wife or mother is wearing a necklace?

We tend to see but not see all the time; that's why coke and Pepsi spend millions and millions of dollars every year to show the same advertisements over and over. They have a constant theme that you remember when you go to buy a soft drink. That's one of the main purposes of advertisements; to establish a readily identifiable symbol for a product (Andrew could see a sign advertising Burger King when he was 18 months old and say, "This is a Burger King town!").

That "recognizing mark" is what I want us to look at today. I want us to see a man who allowed a hole to be placed in his ear so that anyone who saw him walking down the street would immediately say, "This man is a bond-slave by choice". And then I want us to willingly make the same choice about serving Christ; and live so everyone we meet will say, "That person is a Christian".

I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES- This man has somehow incurred a debt that was so big until he was unable to pay it with money and had to use his daily labor as a method of repayment. Christians have the same circumstances and obligations- I Cor 6:20 *For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

II. HIS CHOICE-

A) He had a free Will- He could leave or stay; just as God has given us freedom to live dedicated lives for Him or slack lukewarm lives. God asks for our Dedication but does not force us to give it.

B) His choice affected his family- I try so hard to get our Young Married couples to realize this. If they attend church spasmodically and never get involved then their children grow up without a spiritual foundation. In latter years, when the storms of life come upon them, their "house" will come crashing down.

C) His choice was based on love- *I love my master*. Fear could not motivate him because he had the choice to leave but he enjoyed the fellowship and work of his master so much until he wanted to spend the rest of his life in his service [That's the demonstration of love John 14:21 *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:*]

IT IS NOT A JOB SERVING THE LORD, IT IS A JOY!!

III. HIS CONSECRATION-

A) A Clear Decision- vs 5 He Plainly said.

B) An Open confession- vs 6 Before the Judges (You must believe in your heart and confess with your mouth).

C) A Permanent Dedication- vs 6 He joined the "order of Pierced ears" and determined to serve his master for ever- everyone who saw him knew that he had made the decision.

Paul called himself a bondservant of Christ- Do you have that attitude today? Do you seek to serve the Lord or to make the Lord serve you (Like a 4 year old trying to help mommy; and making more of a mess that being a help). Consecration is like handing God a blank check for our lives with our names signed on the bottom; and trusting Him to use it wisely. Have you done that??

Accepting a MASTER means you:

1. Recognize His Authority- Your Will is replaced with His. [This is an attitude of HEART]
2. Obey His Orders: You do what HE says do. [This is SERVICE]
3. Find a tremendous FREEDOM in allowing Him to make the decision while you simply trust Him- Matt 11:28-30 *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Aren't you tired of slaving under Satan's bondage?? Wouldn't it be great to be able to live life to the fullest and have no worry about death?? Make an open public profession of Christ as your Savior today and then live for Him every day in every way.