

Exodus
When you feel “hemmed in”- Week #10
Small Group Notes
October 8 and 11

Introduction:

Have you ever seen a movie where someone is running away from some bad guys and they reach a dead end where there seems to be no escape and they have to turn around and face their enemy? Can you think in a time where someone came to their rescue at the last second?

When we read Exodus 14, we are going to see the account of how Moses led the children through the Red Sea. The story begins, however, with the children of Israel being at that place of being “hemmed in.” They are looking for an escape and yet God steps in to provide their deliverance as a part of His greater purpose.

The question before us today is when we feel “hemmed in” what are some things we should remember:

Discuss:

1. God might have caused it- Read Exodus 14:1-4

- God loves seemingly impossible situations!
- Judge God’s goodness by the cross, not by today’s trial.

Explain: There was a path that the children of Israel could have taken once they left Egypt that was straightforward and had less obstacles, but God had a different route in store, the best way to go, to show His power and glory again to the people (verse 4).

Ask:

Are you someone that tries to figure out directions on your own or are you someone that listens to Google Maps no matter what?

When you tried to figure it out on your own and gotten lost, was it hard to use your GPS? Did you have someone (maybe your spouse) saying, “you should have used this from the beginning?”

When have you followed God’s directions even when they didn’t make sense from a human standpoint? Can you describe a time when God led you on a “detour” to get you to His goal for you?

2. Stand Firm! Read Exodus 14:10-14

Keys to Standing Firm:

- Don't play the blame game.
- Choose faith over fear.
- Hold your place until He reveals His plan. Hebrews 10:39

Explain: When we are called to stand firm, we recognize that our circumstances may not be ideal and even tempting to us to turn back. However, the call to stand firm is a call to trust in God's plan. When we refuse to stand firm we are giving in to despair and to fear.

Ask:

What new problem were the Israelites facing in this passage? How did the Israelites react when they saw Pharaoh's troops approaching?

What did they do right in their terror? Where did they go wrong? Why do you think they began to blame Moses for their predicament? How was the cloud moving behind the people a powerful part of God's deliverance? How would you explain that to someone today?

What does confidence in the Lord's salvation look like in your life? How did today's message speak to you about standing firm in your life, even when you may not see the answer?

3. God is fighting for you! Read Exodus 14:14, 25

- God is faithful to fight for us even when we are unfaithful
- When God fights, He completely destroys. Exodus 14:30.

Explain: The words of Exodus 14:14 are a great reminder of the providence and protection of God. He truly does see us in our condition and has a love for us that stands in the gap when the enemy attacks. It's important for us to recognize in our lives the times that we try to fight a battle that has already been won and it simply calls for us to demonstrate faith in God.

What was the Israelites' response to their deliverance? What strengthened the Israelites' faith? How does voicing what God has done in your life help you and others to persevere in your faith?

Read Romans 12:19. How does Paul's words about God's protection speak to the battle you are facing today? How can you demonstrate this to others?

4. You will either be humbled or humiliated. Read Exodus 14:15-16, 21-22

- When we are hemmed in, we will either be swept away by grace or judgement

Explain: The result of trusting in God was one of the most powerful miracles in all of Scripture as we see the Red Sea divided so the Israelites could cross on dry ground. But as Pharaoh and his troops would find out, the judgment of God was real as they were swept away when they tried to attack the children of Israel.

Extra note: Baptism is understood in the Old Testament as a picture of the children walking through the Red Sea. From their leaving behind their old ways in Egypt to rising from the Red Sea delivered and experiencing life. Romans 6 affirms how baptism now symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. So when we are baptized we identify with Christ in this way and proclaim what we believe.

Ask:

How do we see both the grace of God and judgment of God on display in this account? How do you see that in the cross?

What is God showing you today from this passage regarding humility and pride?

What challenges in life are you facing now? How will you persevere in your faith in God?

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