



God's Mysterious Ways

Exodus 13:17-14:31

Week of Oct. 06, 2019

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Objective of this study: To understand better and cooperate more with God's reasons for allowing mystery in our lives.

[Remember, the main goal of each Growth Group is to allow God's Word to change your heart so that others would see Jesus in you and be likewise changed to be like him. He wants to change the world through us.]

Worship (5 – 10 minutes)

1. Sing a song or two of praise and thanksgiving to God.
2. Spend five minutes in silence asking God to prepare your heart for hearing his word. After the silence, have someone read **Psalm 63:1-8** meditatively to the group. (Yes, it's the same as last week. Soak up its words.) Pause after each phrase letting God speak to you. **Did anything "jump out at you"?**

Welcome question

What kind of mysteries do you enjoy?

[It's really important when doing this study that we each think about ourselves specifically and ways we need to grow, not how Christians in general need to grow. Do the hard work of letting the Holy Spirit speak to *your* heart.]

Word/Work (60-90 minutes)

1. What stood out from the sermon?
2. Read **Exodus 13:17-14:31** and review the story.
3. This mystery is about Israel being caught between a rock and a hard place, or more specifically, between a pursuing army and a large body of water. What were the reasons they were in this place? How did they see it? (See 14:10-12.)
4. They were terrified, trapped, confused, and looking for someone to blame. Have you had this response in your own life when you have felt trapped, scared, and confused? That is, did you look for someone to blame? What were the results?
5. **Sermon quote:** "God doesn't always cause the problem we find ourselves in, but apparently sometimes he does... God created this problem with intent." What were his motives?
6. **God's Motive #1: To develop the faith and character of his people.** See Exodus 14:13-15. Instead of retaliating when he was accused and blamed, how did Moses respond? What does this say about his faith, and his communication with God?

Sermon quotes: "The 'end' does not grow faith as much as the 'process' does. God is every bit as interested in who we are becoming as where we are going... The point was never simply to get Israel to the **promised land**. It was to have Israel become his **promised people**. And the point for us is never simply to have us in a particular place, but to transform us into a particular kind of people."

"We are continually having to learn that faith is not an abstract concept, but a reality that we live into... The process of faith building is always a long one, and usually difficult... Faith can't be

built if we don't NEED it, and needing it is rarely comfortable... Usually faith building occurs when we least like it and least understand it."

7. Can you relate to the above quotes? What, in particular?

8. How have you experienced this in your life? That is, have you experienced God building your faith and growing you as a person, to be more like Jesus, in the middle of, or in the process of, a confusing or difficult time in your life?

"Jesus can and will make real changes in our lives, if we let him." (This quote is from Ryan Davis's sermon last week.)

9. When we're "in the middle of it" how can we remind ourselves of God's faithfulness and grow in our faith? Here are some things that have been highly valued by many believers who have gone on this road before us: spend time with God, read his Word, talk to him, spend time with other believers and encourage each other, pray for each other, listen to (or even sing) music with lyrics that point to Jesus and remind us of God's faithfulness, notice his provision along the way and thank him for it. Which of these things have you benefited from? Which would you like to try this week?

10. **Sermon quote:** "Many times when we are between a rock and a hard place, we wonder what God is doing, and we have no idea how it will turn out. But what we DO know is that, in his own mysterious ways, God will build our faith, and he will proclaim his own glory."

How can knowing these things help us cooperate with God in the process?

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**Optional, for further study:**

**10. God's Motive #2: To protect his honor among people who treated him with disdain.**

It wasn't only the Egyptians who experienced this. Israel did as well, for example when they made an idol of a calf and worshiped it while on their travels through the desert. See Exodus 32:1-35.

11. A New Testament story of Jesus building the disciples' faith: Matthew 14:22-27. What similarities can you see between this story and the story in Exodus 13:17-14:31?

**Prayer:**

1. Spend the rest of the time praying for each other. **Thank Jesus for how he grows our faith in him.** Here are some things you can pray about for the church:

A. That, as a church, we would actively and purposefully engage in the mission of Jesus in Campbell River.

B. Our church board and staff as they lead us to live out the mission of Jesus.

C. River Kids ministry as they reach out to kids in our community.

D. **Our missionary of the week: Mark and Catherine Buhler.** (Check out the church [website](#) for how to pray for them.)

E. **Local church: Quadra Island Church.**

**Radiant Life October Drive** - Jackets and blankets.

