

Learning From Long Ago

(Insights from Exodus 13:1-16)

Pastor Bob Johnson, Grace Point Church, January 22nd, 2017

What the Passage Says:

(Romans 8:15-16, Proverbs 9:10, Numbers 3:5-51, Deut. 8:11-17)

How does this apply to us today?

(Five Things To Remember in Light of Long Ago)

1. **We are no longer under _____.**
(John 19:30, Matthew 27:51, Hebrews 10:1-18)
2. **The principle of honoring God for who _____ and what _____ still applies.**
(1 Corinthians 6:20, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Luke 18:18-23)
3. **Every Blessing I have is _____.**
(James 1:16-17, 1 Corinthians 4:7)
4. **We've been blessed partly to _____.**
(2 Corinthians 9:11, Matthew 25:14-30, 1 Timothy 6:17-19)
5. **If I offer to God _____ he often lessens what is _____.**
(Proverbs 3:9-10, Exodus 13:2, Malachi 1:8, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, Haggai 1:3-11, Philippians 4:15-19)

This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to "Week 2" of this season of our small groups at GPC! Our small groups are where folks move from 'believers' to 'belongers'. May we receive lots of encouragement and support and deepening friendships in the weeks ahead as we meet together, pray together, study God's Word together and hopefully find other ways to connect outside of our group meetings. Our groups meet for nine months throughout the year. These nine months are broken up in three seasons or quarters. We meet from September - November, take December off, meet again from January - March, and then from April - June. After we take July and August off, we start it all over again :). This quarter our groups will meet for 13 weeks wrapping up the week of April 9th (the week before our Easter Celebration).

Getting Started:

This past Sunday, the first point Bob highlighted was that we are no longer under the O.T. laws. One of those laws back then was no tattoos. Since we are out from under that one, if you were to get a tattoo, what would it be and where would you put it? If you already have one or some, what would be your next one?

Another point raised last Sunday is that we were blessed partly to be a blessing. Did you have an example of giving or any encouragement to be generous or a blessing to others while you were growing up? If so, explain.

It's natural to think that if we made more money (or won the lottery) we would be more generous. But studies show that a rise in income doesn't necessarily mean a rise in giving. Why do you think this is true for some people?

Looking Back:

Looking back on your notes from Sunday as we studied Exodus 13:1-16, what stands out to you regarding what was helpful, what was a new thought, what was challenging, what was confusing ... etc.

Digging Deeper:

1. Bob reminded us that we are managers, not owners of the blessings and gifts that God has given us. One of the biggest challenges in our role as managers is not falling into the mindset that financial success is more rewarding than the pursuit of God and serving Him.

In what ways could Psalm 112:1-9 be helpful in motivating a person to want to focus more on pursuing God and serving him instead of seeking to accumulate more material possessions?

Which of the blessings mentioned in this passage stood out to you the most?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Last Sunday, Bob also shared how God, because of who He is and what He has done, has full claim to our lives and everything we have because we have been bought with a price (Christ's death). In response, God wants us to honor him with our bodies and do all things for His glory. How do you see Romans 12:1-2 expanding on how he wants us to live in light of all he's done for us?

'Renewing our minds' can take on a variety of forms based on our personality and season of life. Can you think of anything specific you have done to 'renew your mind' and grow your connection to God? If so, explain.

3. In an attempt to honor God with what He has gifted to us, the Bible references the 'first fruit principle'. This principle that Bob mentioned last Sunday is both an act of thanking God for his current provision and a way of trusting him for future provision. Yet many of God's people throughout history (both from the Bible and today) have given to God out of their leftovers. What surprises or challenges you about God's attitude toward this practice in Malachi 3:7-12?

What are some of the biggest challenges people face when giving their first-fruits instead of giving out of their leftovers?

4. How could the following passages be of encouragement to you to become more of a generous, first fruits giver?

Proverbs 11:24-28

Matthew 6:19-24

5. In Exodus 13:8,14, God wanted the Israelites to live their lives so that others would be prompted to ask questions regarding why they did what they did. In Matthew 5:16, Jesus encourages us to let our light shine so others can see our good works and give glory to our Heavenly Father.

What are some specific ways we as Christ followers can live out our trust and faithfulness to God so that others might be prompted to ask questions about our faith and choices?

WRAPPING UP ...

Based on last Sunday's message and our discussion, is there any specific application that God might be prompting you to live out this week?

What prayer requests can we share so we can pray for each other before we close and until our next small group meeting?