

Wednesday, May 6th Bible Study Notes
Cedarville United Presbyterian Church Facebook Live
Text: Exodus 32:1-6

Check-In

- How are you feeling today? How is your self-care?
- Margie Donlon – 24 ways to help during quarantine

- Tonight: Joe Carter, *How To Manage Stress During The Coronavirus Crisis*
www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/manage-stress-coronavirus-crisis/
 - A stressor is anything that causes the release of stress hormones and chemicals...
 - Physiological stressors put a demand on our body (injury, pain, or extreme temps)
 - Psychological stressors are non-physical demands we interpret as negative...events (e.g., such as our pandemic), situations (e.g., concerns about employment), and comments (e.g., a hurtful insult from a family member).
 - Stress can cause us to enter fight, flight, or freeze mode:
 - Fight — A state of stress in which we feel agitated or aggressive;
 - Flight — A state of stress in which we feel the urge to avoid or flee from the stressor;
 - Freeze — A state of stress in which the energy mobilized by the perceived threat becomes “locked” into the nervous system, causing us to “freeze.”

How to Manage Stress (not just during pandemic, but always)

- *Understand your stress* – Control what God allows you to control and leave the rest to our sovereign Lord.
- *Take care of your body* – “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” the apostle Paul asks (1 Cor. 3:16).
- *Use the Box-Breathing Technique* – The technique is called box breathing and combines deep breathing with simple counting. Inhale your breath slowly for a count of four. Then, hold the breath for four. Release the breath all the way out through pursed lips, on a count of four. Finally, wait four seconds before saying or doing anything. Repeat the cycle a few more times or as long as you need to help you relax.
- *Avoid unnecessary stressors* – Ask whether the stressor (a) can be avoided and (b) is negatively affecting your life or your relationship with God.
- *Put your trust in the Lord* – We should acknowledge that troubles will come (John 16:33) and that we will face many trials (Jas. 1:2-4) knowing that the Lord cares for you (1 Pet. 5:7), will meet all your needs (Phil. 4:19), and works the good of those who love him (Rom. 8:28). Christians should have no qualms about taking steps to reduce unnecessary stress or preparing our bodies to better handle stressors. But ultimately, peace and comfort can only come from putting our trust in the sovereign provision of God.

Exodus 32 – The Golden Calf

Fruit of the Spirit: Galatians 5:22-23 – *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

How patient are you? Society, in general, is becoming less patient...

- John Ortberg, *Learning to Wait* – <https://www.faithgateway.com/learning-to-wait/>
“We are not a patient people. We tend to be in a horn-honking, microwaving, Fed-Ex mailing, fast-food eating, express-lane shopping hurry. People don’t like to wait in traffic, on the phone, in the store, or at the post office. Robert Levine, in a wonderful book called A Geography of Time, suggests the creation of a new unit of time called the honko-second — ‘the time between when the light changes and the person behind you honks his horn.’ He claims it is the smallest measure of time known to science.”
- How long are people willing to wait? 10 secs for a webpage, 13 min waiting for a bus and 24 min waiting for food in a restaurant. (www.experian.co.uk)
- Amazon shipping speed – used to be 5-7 days no matter what, then Prime shipping in 2 days, now sometimes it’s overnight.

Exodus timeline...

- Israelites in slavery in Egypt for 400 years
- Moses: “Let my people go” (last week: God is the I AM)
- Series of plagues
- Cross the Red Sea
- Wander in desert 40 years – God provided manna

Exodus 19-32...

- People stayed at the base of Mt. Sinai while Moses went to speak with the Lord
- God gave the Ten Commandments, commands regarding the altar, slaves, violence, property, restitution, religious laws, justice, sabbath, annual festivals
- God promises the Israelites will claim the Promised Land as their own
- Moses talked with the people, took Joshua and Aaron and 70 priests back up the mountain with him, then Moses went to the top of the mountain for 40 days
- Moses received instructions about how to make the Ark of the Covenant, the tabernacle, lampstand, how to ordain priests, the offerings, etc.

Chapter 32...

Verse 1 – *When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”*

- God had repeatedly shown His grace and mercy, which the people loved at the time, but they soon forgot the strength and provision of the Lord (Red Sea, manna, etc)
- The people became impatient, so they went to Aaron, who was their temporary leader
- In suggesting that Aaron make them gods they were asking for a visible, tangible object to follow.

Verses 2-4 – Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”

- Aaron suggested the people give him their gold earrings (probably acquired from the Egyptians on the day of Exodus, 12:35–36)
- This explicitly violated the second commandment (20:4–6), which the people had already received from God verbally through Moses.
- Aaron may have been claiming that both the calf and the Lord were “Gods” – the calf was just something they could see.

Verses 5-6 – When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.” They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

- Aaron then made an altar, and the next day in a festival to the Lord
- Their activities led to revelry (suggests immorality).
- This violated the seventh commandment (Ex. 20:14). Singing and dancing were included (32:18–19) and they were “running wild” (v. 25).

Does life feel out of control?

Waiting can lead to disappointment and frustration. In those moments, we can become so focused on our circumstances that we forget God is still in control. If God’s in control, we might ask, then where is He? Why hasn’t anything changed?

Here are three truths to remember:

- 1. Waiting reveals what you worship: When the Israelites’ plans were delayed, they pursued instant gratification because that’s what they actually valued. When you find yourself dissatisfied with your situation, what do you turn to? What you focus on reveals what you value, and what you value determines what you worship.*
- 2. Waiting is never wasted: God wasn’t withholding His promise from the Israelites—He was preparing them for it. God’s timeline is different than ours, but your waiting might actually be preparing you for the plans and purposes God has for you.*
- 3. Waiting helps us focus on God’s faithfulness: God’s faithfulness hasn’t changed. The God who patiently protected and provided for the Israelites also conquered death so that you could experience eternal life. If you find yourself growing weary from waiting, look up and look back. Look for evidence of God’s presence, and look back on what He’s done for you. This will help you hold onto hope. Hoping in God is never wasted because the One who conquered death is still in control, and He’s always at work in your waiting.*

<https://web-assets.youversion.com/html-email/2020-04-waiting/2020-04-waiting-en.html>