

Life Group Discussion Guide
“Forgetting God”
Sunday, August 6, 2017

Open in prayer

- When do you feel most aware of God’s presence with you?
- Recall a time when you felt like God was absent in your life?

Big Idea: To constantly live in the presence of God, we must believe the truth that God is always with us. When we forget God’s presence and lose sight of his activity in our lives, we build idols to replace him. We resist idols when we **rely on the reality** of God’s constant presence, **choose to fear** him alone, and **commit to loving** him most.

“We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade, the presence of God. The world is crowded with him. He walks everywhere incognito. And the incognito is not always hard to penetrate. The real labor is to remember, to attend. In fact, to come awake. Still more, to remain awake.”¹ --CS Lewis, Letters to Malcolm, Chiefly on Prayer

Background

Ex 1-13

- 400 years of slavery
- Moses sees a burning bush.
- God tells Moses to go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites to freedom.
- Pharaoh doesn’t listen. God sends plagues. Pharaoh listens and frees Israelites.
- Pharaoh changes his mind, chases after the Israelites.
- God parts Red Sea. Israelites escape from Egyptians.
- Egyptians try to follow, God closes the water over them and they drown

Ex 16:3

- The Israelites are now 2 months post Exodus. They’ve been in the desert for two months and they start to complain. v3, “If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”

- What’s a story you have of when God did something great and showed himself to be powerful in your life?

¹ [CS Lewis, Letters to Malcolm, Chiefly on Prayer](#)

More Background

- Ex 17-31, God continues to take care of them. They win a war against the Amalekites. Moses goes to Mt. Sinai to meet with God. He receives the 10 commandments and instructions for building the Tabernacle. The Bible tells us he's up there for 40 days and nights.

And while he's up there, the Israelites begin to feel abandoned, and they begin to forget God.

Read Exodus 32:1-14

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- Who is responsible for building the idol?
- How did the Israelites perceive God at this point in the story?
- Have you ever felt forgotten by God in your situation? What can we do when we feel that way?
- How do you respond to Moses prayer for the Israelites?
- Why does God relent in his anger toward the Israelites?
- What is the consequence of focusing on our situation rather than God?
- What are present-day idols we worship?

"You don't get to decide to worship. Everyone worships something. The only choice you get is *what* to worship." Pastor Tim Keller

1. Rely on the Reality

The presence of God is always with us and always at work. **But we are either sensitive to him or not.**

The Psalmist wrote, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (Psalm 23:4).

Hebrews 13:5 - God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

2. Fear God alone

- Do not be anxious about anything (Philippians 4:6)
- Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid (Joshua 1:9)
- Fear not, for I am with you (Isaiah 41:10)
- Do not let your hearts be troubled (John 14:1)
- Fear only God (Matthew 10:28)
- Blessed is the man who fears the Lord (Psalm 115:13)
- Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man (Ecclesiastes 12:13)
- The fear of the Lord leads to life (Proverbs 19:23)

Misplaced fear creates idols in our lives. We focus on what we fear, instead of God and his power in our lives.

3. Commit to Loving Him Most

Read Matthew 19:16-22.

Misplaced fear creates idols, but so does misplaced love.

It is an amazing picture of God's goodness and gracious love toward us that he says: in this whole wide world, you need only to be afraid of one thing, which is me. But in this whole wide world, you may love many things, as long as you love me most.

Close in prayer.