



Exodus Study Questions

Week 3

Much of life feels very ordinary. We wake up, get dressed, grab a bite to eat, head off to work or school, come back home, do other tasks, eat dinner, relax for a few minutes (hopefully), brush our teeth (hopefully), get to bed later than we should, and then do it all over again the next day. Life becomes routine. Sometimes, though, an ordinary-looking day turns out to be quite extra-ordinary!

Main Text: Exodus 3:1-22

Connect

1. What does an “ordinary” day look like for you? Describe your routine.
2. Have you ever had an ordinary day that unexpectedly turned extraordinary? If so, share what happened with your group.
3. What did you find most significant from this week’s sermon?

Understand [Note: A couple endnotes have been added to help provide clarity.]

1. Take a few minutes to remind yourselves of what happened back in chapter 2, verses 11-25. Then, read chapter 3, verses 1-6. In what ways did Moses’ “many days” (see 2:23) of routine, “keeping the flock of his father-in-law,” take an unexpected and extraordinary turn in verses 1-6?
2. Verses 5-6 explain that even the space around the burning bush is holy, so that Moses is even to take off his sandals. What do you think it means for the ground Moses is standing on to be “holy”? What does *holy* even mean?¹ (The word appears 98 times in Exodus!)
3. Read the rest of chapter 3. Until now, God has seemed distant and silent—maybe even unaware or uninterested (at least before 2:23). How do verses 7-10 reveal something very different?

4. God's name in verse 14 is puzzling, as it's derived from the Hebrew verb "to be" or "is." It's the name that is commonly translated as "LORD" in our Bibles, and it likely refers to God's active presence.² Why do you think God would reveal Himself this way?

5. It's revealed in verses 16-22 that, while Israel's leaders will listen to Moses, Pharaoh won't "unless compelled by a mighty hand" (v. 19). According to verses 20-22, how is the active, present God planning to overcome Pharaoh and provide for His people?

Apply

1. Days that seem ordinary and routine can be days when we wonder whether God is aware or present with us. What can this passage teach us about God's engagement in our lives even when we don't feel it?

2. Moses is told to remove his dirty sandals because even the ground was made holy by God's presence. What does it look like for us to acknowledge God's holiness as we go about our lives today?

3. We said earlier that God's name, I AM, likely refers to His active presence in our lives. The most vivid display of this would come centuries later with the birth of Immanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Have you seen God's active presence in your life? If so, share the story with your group. If not, pray together as a group that you would begin to see it!

4. In verses 18-19, God calls Moses to do something that He knows will not work! Verses 20-22, though, reveal a greater purpose. Do you ever feel like God has called you to do something that doesn't seem to work (e.g., talking to a friend about Jesus)? If so, do you think God could still have a greater purpose in mind that you can't yet see?

5. Above all, this chapter is about God revealing Himself to Moses through a supernatural encounter. What have you learned about God or been reminded of in this chapter?

Endnotes:

1. According to one Hebrew lexicon, the word holy has the basic meaning of "apartness, sacredness" (Brown-Driver-Briggs).

2. Scholars understand this name (in Hebrew, YHWH) as being descriptive of God's nature (a common purpose for names in the setting of Exodus) more than of His identity. In this case, the "is-ness" of God's nature refers to God's active presence, both in terms of time and space. He is the God who is actively present in both this moment and in this place...in spite of how bleak this moment and this place may appear!