

The Journey: "Experiencing Elim"

Exodus 15:22-27

3/3/24

Discussion Guide

Warm Up

Check in with everyone and ask them how their week went.

Then ask if anyone could relate to Pastor Richard's struggle to live the Christian life. What was his error?

The Passage:

²² Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) ²⁴ So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

²⁵ Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink.

There the LORD issued a ruling and instruction for them and put them to the test. ²⁶ He said, "If you listen carefully to the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."

²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water. Exodus 15:22-27

1. What is the order of salvation? How a person answers this question will have a significant impact on their faith and walk with God. Here are the two options:
 - A person feels the need for God in their life. They repent. They start getting their act together. At some point when they feel they are good enough, they begin to attend Church in order to be around like-minded people, so they will remain on the straight and narrow.
 - A person feels the need for God. They attend church and hear the Gospel. They ask Christ into their life. They continue to attend church, read the Bible, pray and serve others. Over time God cleans up their act.

Take each approach and spin out the ramifications.

2. Why does salvation need to be by faith alone, in the grace of God alone, through the sacrifice of Christ alone?
3. What is baptism? If a person is not baptized does that mean they aren't a believer? Why should a person be baptized? Have you been baptized? Share what the experience was like.
4. Put yourself in Israel's shoes. You are walking for days in the hot, unforgiving desert. You finally find water but it's putrid. God sweetens it but it still tastes funny. You go a couple more days

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without water. You're thirsty and wonder is there any hope in sight and then you come across this incredible oasis *"where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water."* (vs. 27) Share what that must have been like for the Israelites.

In what ways is knowing Christ like Elim? Is the Christian life always an Elim-type experience? Share a time when you felt refreshed by God and share a time you felt parched by life.

5. Read the passages below. They describe the promises of God when it comes to the life of a Christian. Discuss them.

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10

"On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit,..." John 7:37-39

"Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

6. Where are you in your walk with God. Circle the one that comes closest.
- Still in Egypt.
 - In the desert but still on the shores of the Red Sea. You haven't taken the plunge yet.
 - On the other side of the Red Sea but still haven't arrived at Elim.
 - Living at Marah.
 - Camped out at Elim.

7. Read the passage below. This was Israel's mistake in their walk with God.

*"My people have committed two sins:
They have forsaken me,
the spring of living water,
and have dug their own cisterns,
broken cisterns that cannot hold water. Jeremiah 2:13*

In what ways do we do the same thing. Instead of drinking from the wells of refreshment provided by God we "dig our own wells?" What are the common wells we dig and drink from to find satisfaction? Do they work?

8. How do we experience Elim? List the wells and tents God provides that we can use to be refreshed spiritually. From the list share the ones that have been the most instrumental in your spiritual growth. Are there any that you haven't tried that you'd like to try.

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9. Richard Foster wrote a book call, "*Celebration of Discipline.*" According to him, the Church has 12 wells God has provided from which we can draw to find spiritual refreshment. They are: Meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, service, confession, worship, guidance, and celebration.

From which ones do you find the greatest spiritual refreshment? Is there a well you've never tried or never knew it was a well to draw from to find satisfaction?

10. Read the passage below. What does it say is the key to experiencing "Elim?"

*Oh, the joys of those who do not
follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners,
or join in with mockers.*

² *But they delight in the law of the Lord,
meditating on it day and night.*

³ *They are like trees planted along the riverbank,
bearing fruit each season.*

*Their leaves never wither,
and they prosper in all they do.* Psalm 1:1-3

11. Final thoughts.

End by praying for each other. Pray for the church and its staff as it leads the congregation in their walk with God and as they try to provide spiritual refreshment through the preaching of the Word, worship, music, fellowship, service, etc.