

EXODUS 14:10-18

Obstacles & CLOSED DOORS

REV. DR. HOWARD-JOHN WESLEY



Village Meeting Week of:
October 29, 2018

Sermon Date:
June 10, 2018

CURRICULUM
GUIDE

Notes for Facilitators:

Please begin and end each Village Discussion with prayer. The curriculum guide contains a brief synopsis of the sermon for the week. As well, below are discussion questions and activities that you may use for your Village weekly meeting. This guide is meant to be a resource for the discussion. You may choose to use the questions you feel are most appropriate for the group or let your Villagers interest in the sermon steer the conversation. While you have flexibility to choose the questions and activities that most resonate with your group, please always keep in mind the aim for the discussion: to lead Village participants into deeper relationship with the Lord through discussion of the sermon, and to provide for deep connection among members of the Village. This sermon is less recent than the ones we typically discuss in Village so it will be good for facilitators to designate time of recap and summary.





Sermon Summary

Over a million people followed Moses out of Egypt because they believed that Moses was following God. When they encountered the adversity of the red sea they were upset with Moses because many of them saw it as a closed door. Moses had to listen to God and realize that the Red Sea was not a closed door, it was simply an obstacle. God will bring us to Red Sea moments and our task is to prayerfully discern whether it is closed door or whether it is an obstacle that God wants us to push through. The sermon teaches us to evaluate if our Red Sea is a sign that we're going in the wrong direction or is it a sign that we need to stretch our faith?

Key Points

Pastor Wesley suggests the following points that will help us determine the difference between closed doors and obstacles. When confronting a Red Sea you should:

1. Ask whether you came to the situation by personal desire or prayerful discernment
2. Stand still and present yourself in active submission to God
3. Let go of your fear because wrong decisions won't cost you everything
4. Sit back and watch God be God
5. When you see God make a way, just go

Getting To Know You Questions:

- 1) What insight, principle, or observation from this message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.
- 2) Pastor Wesley stated that God uses both closed doors and obstacles. Share a time when God closed a door for you and it turned out to be a blessing.
- 3) Pastor indicated that there was a challenge where a million Hebrews were fleeing **"on foot"** toward their promised future of freedom, while the Egyptians were pursuing them **"on chariots"**. What's going on in your life right now that makes it feel like your unwanted past is catching up to you when all you want to do is move forward? How do you hold on to patience when you can't move as fast as others around you?

Into The Bible Questions:

- 4) Pastor Wesley cited Exodus 14:13 as God's admonition to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which He will show you today?" Psalm 46:10 and Psalm 37:7 are other "Be still" Scriptures. We often remember the "be still" part but neglect the actions that are to follow. Being still should be a means, not an objective. Based on the cited scripture, what actions should we take after becoming still?
- 5) The first nine plagues did not move Pharaoh to action. Only when the 10th became "personal" was Pharaoh moved to action. What issues have you ignored because they didn't affect you personally? How do we become empathetic earlier?
- 6) Much of the conflict in Chapter 14, stems from a real difference in perspective. The people saw the Red Sea as a closed door, but Moses saw the Red Sea as an obstacle. What have you done when you believed that God was presenting an "obstacle" when those around you believe that God has presented a "door?"

Life Application Questions:

- 7) Can you recall a time when God answered a prayer and in the process of your deliverance, another obstacle presented itself that seemed worse than your original situation? How did you respond to that situation?
- 8) Pastor taught us that one million people followed Moses, because they believe Moses is following God. Tell your Village about someone in your life that you are confident follows God? How do you know? What are the telltale signs of someone who follows God?
- 9) The Hebrew people believe that this decision is going to cost them their lives. Have you ever felt like you had to make a really costly decision? How did you arrive at the decision? How do you know when you've made a Godly decision?



"Can I Push It?"

Pastor taught us that "God just doesn't deliver y'all, God delivers ALL of the oppressed." Sometimes we're the "all" and sometimes we're the "y'all." Who would God consider the "all" in church and how can we do better to walk together in love and liberation?

Activity:

Moses could be confident that the Red Sea was an obstacle partially because God had already spoken to Moses about Pharaoh. What has God said to you that has carried you through difficult times? On a sticky note or scrap piece of paper, write down a scripture, reminder, encouraging message. Fold your message, put your initials on the outside, and put it in a box/bowl. Before you leave, grab a slip (not yours) and reflect on that throughout this week.



Spirit Work:

Rick Warren, in one of his devotionals, asserts that God answers prayers in one of four ways:

1. When the request is not right, God says, "No."
2. When the timing is not right, God says, "Slow."
3. When the request and timing are right, but you're not right, God says, "Grow."
4. When the request and the timing's right and you're right, then God says, "Go."

Take a piece of paper and write down a list of about a dozen prayers you've prayed recently. Consider God's answer for each one and let that inform your prayer life for the coming week. Pay special attention to the "slow" and "grow" answers and see how God can help you in areas where you need to develop.