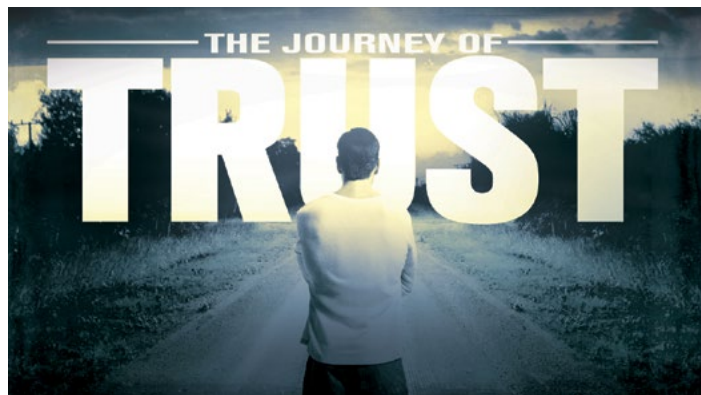


BEYOND THE WEEKEND

For the sermon on May 4-5, 2013
"Trust in the Desert"



Welcome to *Beyond the Weekend*! The experiences below are designed to connect with the weekend message and fit a variety of learning styles. They provide additional readings from other sections of Scripture such as the Old Testament, Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles (letters). Take 20-30 minutes each day and enjoy your pursuit of God!



Prefer e-mail? ***Beyond the Weekend*** is also available via daily e-mails, which include links to the Scripture (both written and audio), the sermon video, and a weekly blog post. To sign up for the daily e-mails, go to adabible.org/btw.

Day 1 Psalm 107.1-9 | The Exodus and God's Faithfulness

The story that unfolds in the pages of Exodus is not the story of an organized community of God. It's about God's people, but they're a wandering hoard of ex-slaves. They are not structured like an army. They lack any semblance of organization except that Moses is their leader and God is rescuing them.

But that's enough. It's exactly what God wanted. He desired a people who would listen to him alone and follow his lead. He wanted to shape them into his image. Their survival was dependent on his faithfulness alone. The people would cry out, and God would respond to them. He heard their prayers.

In reality, from those days until today, all of God's people are an exodus-shaped people. We are all hungry and thirsty, longing to see God work on our behalf. And the promise of God hearing his people continues today. He still hears the prayers of those in need and saves them. Today, read Psalm 107.1-9 and listen to a wonderful song of trust in God's faithfulness: "He's Always Been Faithful" by Sara Groves ([search youtube.com](http://search.youtube.com)).

Day 2 2 Corinthians 12.9-10 | God's Leading In Periods of Testing

In Exodus 16, the children of God endure a period of testing. They are deprived of food and struggle to see how God will save them. Again, he wants to shape them into a people who reflect his nature and his character. Suffering is one of the tools God uses to do that. It is in periods of deprivation that God teaches his people.

C.S. Lewis wrote: "But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world" (*The Problem of Pain*, p. 91).

Today, read 2 Corinthians 12.9-10 and identify one area of your life where you can discern God is trying to shape you. Then, take joy in this truth: "My grace is sufficient for you...my power is made perfect in weakness..."

Day 3 Exodus 15.22-27; Psalm 46 | Crying Out to God

They went three days in the wilderness and found no water (Exodus 15.22, ESV).

Imagine that. The people of Israel were in the desert—scorching heat, blistering sand, searing wind, and no water. There was nothing Moses could do. He had no alternatives. Instead, he did the only thing he knew to do. He cried out to God.

There will be times in our spiritual life where we will feel like we have no alternatives. We are stuck. We can't see a way out. Today, read Exodus 15.22-27 and pray through Psalm 46 (read it slowly and respond to God in prayer to the lines that stand out to you). Revel in the fact that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46.1, ESV). Realize God still rescues today. Cry out to him for any area where you need deliverance.

Day 4 1 Thessalonians 4.1-8 | God's Sanctification

The exodus of Israel is a symbol of God's ongoing sanctification of his people today. "Sanctification" is the biblical term for the process by which God purifies us and makes us more fully into his image. It begins when we are saved and continues as God transforms the heart to make our character more like Christ's.

In 1 Thessalonians 4.1-8, Paul describes this process of sanctification and states that it is God's will for our lives. We are called to cast off anything that dishonors God and instead seek holiness (v. 7). Whatever we may or may not know about God's will for our lives, **sanctification is God's plan**. He intends to make us more like him. He wants our will to be focused on pleasing him. Today, give up something you know is holding you back from fully pleasing the Lord. Replace that time or space with something that you know pleases God.

Day 5 Hosea 2 | The Power of Solitude

*Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness,
and speak tenderly to her (Hosea 2.14, ESV).*

Notice, it is often in the desert where God's people are able to keenly hear from him. They are without distractions or alternative voices. This is God's intention for the desert in our lives. We are to become a listening community, asking the question, "Lord, what would you have for me?"

Since God uniquely shapes us in moments of solitude, consider taking time today for some intentionally quiet time with God. Don't use words. Just sit still in a quiet space for 15-20 minutes, asking God to speak. Allow God the freedom and opportunity to speak. Determine to do everything you can to obey. If he doesn't seem to speak, simply receive the time of rest and quiet as a gift from his hands. Part of trusting God is learning to wait and rest in his presence with or without "hearing" anything.

MORE

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Questions or Comments | Contact Tim Nelson, pastor of spiritual formation at tnelson@adabile.org.

BTW Blog

Ada Bible Church staff and leaders share how God is meeting them through the sermons. BTW blog posts are hosted on Sabea, our blog for spiritual formation, and go live on Wednesdays.

This week we hear from Rich Nibbe, worship arts pastor.

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