

## **ENCOUNTER - Week 1 (God is Always At Work)**

*Exodus 2:1-10, 2 Corinthians 5:17-20, John 5:17, 19-20*

### **INTRODUCTION TO SERIES:**

2020 is here and we are looking forward to all God is going to do in our lives individually, and collectively at the MET church. Who is ready to see God do something big in your life today? What about in the life of our community?

If you have your bibles or smartphones dialed up today - we are going to be in Exodus for the next few weeks. It's a look through the life, calling, and obedience of a man many of us know of but might not know much about - MOSES.

- Connection to Blackaby's study, *Experiencing God*

We start today with a prayer - "God, I want you to move in my life. I want to know that you're there, that you are with me, that my relationship with you, Oh God, is tangible - that I can feel and see you move in my life and in the lives of those I come in contact with."

It's put within us to be excavated - almost like a sculpture.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us that God has put eternity in the hearts of men. It's that we long to see God move, and not just to know about it happening at one point or another, but can I encounter God now...in MY life. Can I feel the breath of his Holy Spirit, can I hear the sound of his whisper...he has put it in the hearts of every person here. We all want to see God move in our midst...

This series is really aiming our church, early in the year, at the heart of seeking God and begging him to reveal himself to us. We want to see God move. We want to encounter God. And it begins with the question we asked all Fall

### **Setup the story for the next several weeks from Exodus 1**

- Joseph was a rescuer and saved a generation through his faithfulness to store up food and provision - Egyptians and Israelites alike
- His death = new king who forgot all God did through Joseph to save, imprisoned Israelites as slaves
- New Pharaoh wanted every Hebrew male killed and thrown into the Nile River, they were multiplying too fast and he believed one day would overrun the Egyptians
- The birth and protection of Moses

### **[READ Exodus 2:1-10]**

There are 7 realities we are going to talk about in this series as it pertains to encountering and experiencing God - the first is this "**God is always at work.**"

## **PASSAGE:**

I want to take a second and point out a few things from the passage that I think stand out in our understanding of God's involvement in what's happening in the relationship with the Israelites, his people, and the Egyptians - the oppressor.

1. When God's plans (his people) multiply, it threatens the plans of those who do not recognize God as God. Pharaoh felt a deep sense of panic when he realized that the people of God would one day outnumber the Egyptian people.
2. God provided provision with Moses' mother in a way that could only be explained by the providence and sovereignty of God
3. Moses' name (*verse 10*) - *"I lifted him up out of the water."* This was about what God was going to do - he was whispering...I am working, do you see me? Do you hear me? I am about to do a miraculous thing...

God is always at work. There's never a time when his spirit is not moving and hovering in the world in which we live to accomplish his purposes. If we are going to encounter God, there must be a new formed understanding in each of us.

## **THIS IS GOD'S WORLD**

**ILLUSTRATION** - Claire when she was about 5, construction.  
"R" - "It's your world, we're just living in it...". ☺

Let's head back to our question we asked of God in the fall, "God what are you inviting me into?" You always have something for me to participate in, to accomplish through your Spirit's power in me. It's your world, God, I am just living

in it as a gift from you - I want to see your plan and purpose come forth in my life...it's your world, not mine.

So let's get practical this morning - if you want to encounter God and experience him in a fresh way, where do you start? As with anything, in any situation, start with Jesus, you'll find no better model in life than that of Jesus. Listen to what the Son of God said about the world in which he entered:

"My Father is still working, and I am working... I assure you: The Son is not able to do anything on His own, but only what He sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son also does these things in the same way. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him everything He is doing." - John 5:17, 19-20

## **JESUS' MODEL:**

### **KNOW YOUR WHY**

A "love relationship" is the why of every human being. It's that hard, but that simple. You and I are created to be in a loving union with God and others. If we fail to have that with him, then understanding how he's working, or hearing his voice, seeing him move will be almost impossible. The relationship with God comes as the primary - understand the why before seeing the what.

As you examine the "why" in life, the relationship with God as your primary, you'll begin to see that not only is God at work around you, but he's also always at work within you - he's not only doing something in your situation, but he's also working out his plan in your life to shape you more into the image of Christ - this is a critical reality!

Sometimes it's hard to see what God is doing because God is actually shaping our hearts, our internal connection to him, our character through what is happening around us. It's always symmetry with God in this way - he's working around us AND in us. Why? To display his glory, and to refine our relationship with him, shaping us into the image of his Son.

"Whenever it seems that God is not doing anything fresh in your life, focus on the love relationship and stay there until God gives you a new assignment." - Henry Blackaby

The relationship with his people was paramount to God's rescue of them from the hands of an Egyptian oppressor - you feeling oppressed...return to your relationship with the Father.

### **ABSOLUTE SURRENDER**

**ILLUSTRATION:** *Daniel Blake's story from Christmas Eve* - new adjustment for me through the holidays. But my schedule of family, ministry, preparation, vision casting, all take a back seat to what God is doing - I simply surrender and join him in it and listen to what he did! It's HIS world...I get to play a part.

If you see God moving, be willing to cancel a meeting or extend that coffee if it is the Lord talking - this is what it means to be completely surrendered. **My plans must always take a back seat to what God is already doing.** I must ride "shotgun" in life if this is to happen on a regular basis.

There's no other way than me being absolutely surrendered to the purposes and plans of God - the ones he ALREADY has in mind! (Ephesians 2:10 - "Which God prepared in advance for us to do...")

You might be asking, "How can I tell what is God and what isn't? I can't tell if it's God's voice or my own desires."

Learning to recognize how and where God is at work is tricky. It requires spending enough time reading scripture that you know how to recognize God, you recognize the kind of things God would say, you know God's character well enough to recognize what He would or would not do.

The sheep recognize the Shepherd's voice. And it also requires the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit serves as a guide and that leadership of the Spirit grows directly correlated with how completely we surrender ourselves to the Holy Spirit's leadership.

## COMPLETE DEPENDENCE

Jesus modelled this - Peter referenced Jesus' mentality and model in Acts 2:22. God was accomplishing HIS purposes through Jesus, the Son.

If Jesus was fully dependent on the Father as the Son of God, how ridiculous is it really for us to set out on our own ministry endeavor(s) without the plans and purposes of God leading us every step of the way? Jesus didn't launch a new ministry. He got in the river of God's story and allowed his life to be poured out as an offering to the will of the Father. This is critical for you and I to encounter a movement of God in our lives. Partial surrender will not do, it must be all encompassing, fully present, complete dependence.

If that wasn't enough, according to John 6:44, you and I don't even seek the Father apart from him drawing us to himself. So it takes an initiation of God the Father! (This in coming weeks)

"God is orchestrating history. He is present and in the middle of human activity. God is actively at work redeeming a lost world, and He chooses to involve His servants in carrying out His redemptive plans." - Henry Blackaby

God's work in the world supersedes any plans or even giftedness I have in me. Later in Moses' life we'll see his calling to a mission God had planned for Moses to do - Moses questions it at every front with so many reasons he MUST NOT BE THE MAN FOR THE JOB.

But all along, God called the man, THEN equipped him to do the work. Don't let your "giftedness" or lack thereof dictate your obedience to God - or you have forgotten your why.

The real key to understanding the work of God, is to understand the ownership of God. If God owns everything, then it reasons that all work done in and through a person is his work. All plans for the world stream from the river of God - his flow, his timing, his resourcing, his gifting, but also his invitation. Are you in the river? It's his world. We're just living in it.

God, what are you inviting me into?

"Functional Atheism" - We live like maybe there's a God but he's irrelevant to what's happening around me. Things would be different if God were paying attention. How can God just sit there and do nothing while tragedies happen on both a personal and global scale? Can I believe that God is always working if in fact God is NOT working in the WAY I expect him to, doing what I want him to, or doing what I've asked him to do over and over again?