

The



Compass

August 16 - August 22, 2010

Faith Journey - Adventures in Trust
The Enduring Appeal of False Gods

Overview

Times may change, but the challenges we face are often the same. For the Israelites, they were challenged with waiting for Moses while he was up on the mountain. The waiting caused them to rush ahead to make the golden calf. For us, we often rush ahead in our lives to choose other “gods.” These can be defined by those things which receive our undue devotion or worship. Let’s look for timeless principles as we study together.

Exodus 32

This week our focal passage will be Exodus 32, which is an enduring message for all of us. The passage is too big to fit here, so you'll need to use your own Bible. Here is the reading schedule for the week.

Monday – Exodus 32 in entirety

Tuesday – Exodus 32:1-6

Wednesday – Exodus 32:7-16

Thursday – Exodus 32:17-29

Friday – Exodus 32:30-35

Saturday – Exodus 32 in entirety

Memory Verse – Exodus 20:3

You shall have no other gods before me. (NIV)

Biblical Context

God's own people, the Israelites, had experienced God's presence in their camp and had seen God come to their rescue time after time. Even so, the hearts of these eyewitnesses were unchanged. Shortly after Moses left to receive the law from God, the Israelites and their leaders set aside what they had experienced of God, formed their own gods, and indulged in idol worship.

Our Context

Bill and Sarah were struggling. Their summer calendar had a conflict with two camps on the same week for their son, Hunter. One camp was their annual church camp. Another was a soccer camp Hunter's coach had highly recommended. Each night they discussed their decision, and they truly debated whether or not soccer had become more important to them than God.



Monday, August 16th

First Impressions

Review your Compass from last week, Exodus 19 - 24. What practical things can you do this week to focus on who God is and deepen your relationship with Him? Be specific and write your ideas below so you can follow through.

Read Exodus 32. Look for the ways a lack of faith in God caused the Israelites to engage in sinful activities. List them below.

Tuesday – August 17th

Focus: In Moses' absence, the Israelites formed their own god and began to worship it.

Read: Exodus 32:1-6 and 24:12-18

Discover:

1. How long were the Israelites to wait for Moses' return from the mountain? During that time, who was in charge and how were disagreements to be handled?
2. Re-write Exodus 32:1 below. Underline the untruths found in this statement by the Israelites.
3. How is God disrespected by the term "this fellow" and by crediting Moses for the rescue from the Pharaoh?

Apply: Contemplate your feelings and worries. Where in your life are you tempted to give up on God and look for solutions on your own?

Wednesday – August 18th

Focus: After Moses left to go up on the mountain to meet God, Aaron formed a plan to appease the people.

Read: Exodus 32:7-16 and 1 Corinthians 10:7

Discover:

1. How long do you think it takes Aaron and the Israelites to melt down the gold, fashion the calf, worship, and start the party?
2. Think of examples of leaders you know (historical and current) who yielded to outside influences? List some of them.

Apply: What positions of leadership and influence do you hold? What specifically will you do to resist pressure to compromise?

Thursday – August 19th

Focus: Moses returns, quickly destroys the golden calf, and God's punishment begins.

Read: Exodus 32:17-29

Discover:

1. What does Aaron's answer to Moses (vs. 21-25) indicate about the extra responsibilities leaders have?
2. How can we become poor witnesses when we fail to follow God in obedience? What, if anything, can we do to redeem ourselves?
3. In what way do you see consequences that illustrate the penalty of disobeying God?

Apply: What are you letting get out of control? What do you resolve to do to get back in God's will?

Friday – August 20th

Focus: The worship of anything other than the one true God is worshipping an idol.

Read: Exodus 32:30-35 and Numbers 26:63-65

Discover:

1. What do these passages tell you about the certainty and timing of God's punishment?
2. How does this punishment expand or affect your view of God?

Apply: Learn the short memory verse, Exodus 20:3. Contemplate what things or people in your life compete for your attention. Have these become idols in your life?

Saturday – August 21st

Focus: God wanted the Israelites to focus on and worship only Him.

Read: Review Exodus 32

Apply:

Consider how you respond when you don't feel God close to you (even though He's there). Most of us respond by taking refuge in man-made gods of work, possessions, family, health, or status. After you've identified what man-made things compete for your attention, write them down on separate pieces of paper. Resolve to worship God alone and ask Him to help you in your resolution not to worship the items you've written down. Symbolically destroy the slips of paper as you give each of the items up and reset your focus and worship on God alone.

Base Camp Suggestions

Eating together...

Talk about specific ways you've intentionally slowed your pace of life this calendar year.

Being family together...

Read Exodus 32 together. Talk about "idols." What are some of the things in our lives that can become more important than God?

Applying together...

1. Put yourself in the sandals of the Israelites. Why do you think they would do this?
2. What are ways you personally get ahead of God?
3. What are things in your life you feel may be competing with God for your attention?
4. How does community (our Base Camp) come alongside you to help in this?

Praying together...

Get in smaller groups and share your answer to #3 above. Take time to specifically pray for each other to move more and more in the direction of making God first.

For Families with a Child in Tiny Town (0 to Pre-K)

Verse: “You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

Our littlest ones won't understand the concept of things or people taking the place of God. However, it's never too early to let them know God has rules He expects us to follow and He wants to be number one in our lives.

Activity: Have your child pick out five of their favorite toys. Ask them why each one is important. Read Exodus 20:3. Tell your children the Bible, God's Word, gives us rules. It's very important to make sure no person or thing takes God's special place in our lives. Play a game of “Follow the Leader” with your child and remind him/her that we should always follow God's rules. Take turns leading.

If your child learned the verse and completed this or another of our family activities, return this page to the check-in station.

Parent Signature

Date

For Families with a Child In Adventure Quest

Spend time exploring Exodus 20:3: “You shall have no other gods before me.” The Israelites were waiting on Moses to come down from the mountain. While waiting, they became impatient and began worshiping a golden calf. Ask, “Who is our one true God? Who are the other gods mentioned in Exodus 20:3?”

Ask, “In our lives today, what do we put in front of our one true God?” (It could be hobbies, sports, or anything else.)

Write down the things in your family that get in the way of your relationship with God. As a family, discuss how to put God at the top of your priority list.

If your child learned the verse and completed this activity, please return this page to the check-in station with your signature.

Parent Signature

Date

For Families with a Child In Elevate

Study Exodus 32. The Israelites were not patient. They were distracted and full of deception. While Moses was on the mountain, they started to worship a golden calf.

Ask your child to write a paragraph about what distracts them from God. Dads, take your son somewhere away from daily distractions and discuss how we substitute doing activities instead of spending time with God. (Moms, do the same with your daughter.)

Come together and share with each other ways your family can give God the proper place in your home. Start with spending time in a special time of family sharing and prayer.

If your child learned the verse and completed this activity, please return this page to the check-in station.

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Student Base Camp Ideas

What happens when we become weary of waiting? Some just give up. Some get angry. Some turn their attention to something else. Others, though, continue to wait patiently. The Israelites got tired of waiting for God's direction. They turned their hearts toward something else.

1. What did you find interesting about how the Israelites handled themselves during their time of waiting? What about Aaron's response to Moses?
2. How do we put other things before God? How does that relate to waiting patiently on God?
3. We may not create a golden calf to worship, but what are other things that distract us from God, that distract us from waiting patiently for His direction?
4. Share and pray for one another about the "idols" and distractions we have. How can we surrender everything to God?

Sermon and Connection Class Notes

Mission and Vision

Our mission at Tri-Lakes Chapel is to help people connect: intimately with God, intentionally with God's family, and influentially with God's world. Our vision is to develop genuine Biblical community on every street in the Tri-Lakes region.

To this end, we have designed this Compass with a holistic, communal approach to spiritual growth that we believe will grow us together to be more like Jesus. This approach has four elements which work in an integrated fashion.

They are:

Household - Using this resource daily, both personally and communally, as our road map to integrated, spiritual growth.

Base Camp - Small groups meeting in homes to live life together while applying the message of the week.

Connection Class - Mid-size Sunday groups digging deeper together through detailed teaching and discussion.

Worship Service - Coming together corporately to focus on and respond to the heart of the week's passage.

We believe this integrated approach will bring dynamic growth in and through our Tri-Lakes family. Our hope is to experience communal, spiritual transformation as we - together-engage at all four levels.