

Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”*

Read Exodus 33:12-23. As a creative way to hear the dialogue of this text assign different people to read the words of Moses, God, and the narrator.

1. Moses’ intimacy with God was sustained and nourished by prayer. What can Moses, as seen in this passage, teach us about a life of intimacy and prayer with God?
Pay attention to what he says, but also imagine how he might have said these things.

2. What does Moses request from God, directly and indirectly, in this dialogue with him (13, 15, 18)?
Also think about what Kevin mentioned in the sermon.

What kind of things do you request from God in your prayers? Or think about the last prayer you heard—what kinds of requests were made?

How do these two lists compare? And, again, how might Moses’ words here in our text inform the prayers we pray?

3. One of Moses’ central requests is to know God more deeply (13). Why do you think it is important for Christians to know God?

What knowledge of God do we receive from this passage? In other words, what does this passage teach us about God?

How does prayer bring about knowledge of God?

If you could know one aspect of God more deeply, what characteristic would you choose and why?

4. In response to Moses God promises his presence to him alone (v. 14 uses a singular “you”). Moses responds back by also requesting Israel’s inclusion in that promise (v. 15 uses a plural “us”). Why might this shift be significant in the course of these events between God, Moses, and Israel?

Check Bible Notes for information about the context of this prayer.

How does shifting from praying for just ourselves to including other people change the way we pray and the way we live?

Name one other person you will pray for in the upcoming week and tell why you chose that person.

If you had one prayer request for the entire College Hills Church what would it be? Why?

5. According to Moses, why is God’s presence significant for his people (15-16)?

What is comforting about God’s presence? What is challenging about God’s presence?

How might it change your life if you knew that God’s presence was with you each moment of the day?

What are some of the ways that help you remember God’s promise that he is always with us? Are there objects you carry? Places you regularly go? Practices you regularly participate in?

† **The million-dollar question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It’s okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

Moses’ prayer on behalf of Israel was a bold and courageous prayer to God. Right now what is the most courageous prayer you could pray for yourself *and* for someone else in your life?

Resources

Bible notes

This dialogue between Moses and God occurs within the larger context of chapters 32-34. In chapter 32 the Israelites break the covenant through the incident with the golden calf. In chapter 34 the covenant is renewed by Moses' return to the people with his face shining and with new tablets representing a restored covenant. In the middle stands chapter 33 where Moses interacts with God on behalf of the people. In other words, prayer stands as the bridge between broken covenant and covenant renewal. Go back and read chapters 32-34 to understand the context of Moses' dialogue with God in verses 12-23. Also notice how often Moses prays through this series of events.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Play the "Egg Toss" Game

Get a dozen eggs (or as many as you need) and find a space in your backyard. Line up the kids and adults into two equal lines facing each other. Make sure everyone has a partner directly opposite of him or her. Then give one of the partners an egg (it's more fun if they are *not* hard-boiled).

Begin allowing the partners to toss the egg back and forth. Every few throws make every team take a step back from each other. Teams are out once their egg breaks. The winning team is the one who standing at the end with an unbroken egg. Gather everyone and ask...

What made the game difficult? What made it easy?

Why did closeness make the activity easier? What other things do we do on a day-to-day basis where being closer makes it easier?

Read Exodus 33: 12-23. In our text Moses prays that God would be near to him and his people. Why is it important that we keep God close? How does prayer help us to make sure we stay close to God?

Close with a prayer over each of the kids in light of the beginning of the new school year.



August 1, 2010

LIFE Group Guide

Exodus 33:12-23 – Praying to Learn

By Wilson McCoy (wilson.mccoy@gmail.com)

The theme: Prayer is a two-way street. We respond to God and God responds to us. We open up to God and God opens up to us. Such interaction takes great courage and faith. Prayer is central to the life of the believer because through the act of prayer we move deeper into relationship with God.

This week Kevin's sermon focused on Moses as an example of prayer. Moses' life was characterized by intimacy with God. He strived to know God more deeply, to have his presence more fully, and to see his glory more clearly. This example stands as a comfort in knowing God goes with us. However, Moses also challenges all believers to never stop seeking relationship with God.

Leadership tip: Every once in a while someone will complain, "I know you're listening, but you don't hear me." They recognize that there is a deeper level of paying attention than just listening to words. To really hear someone is to pay close attention, to try to understand what they are saying and why they are saying such things. Really hearing is central to leading a group. Your example makes everyone feel more welcome and promotes better dialogue among the participants.

Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ For those who served at the School Store share one of your most memorable experiences from this year's event.
- ❖ Everyone share the name and location of the high school you attended growing up. Also, name the mascot.
- ❖ The school year is about to get underway. Share one of your favorite memories about the start of the new school year (now or when you were growing up).

Overflow 2010

A Season of Service, A Celebration of Homecoming



As the summer months begin to fade many are already anticipating the fall. At College Hills we want to embrace this new season of life through a season of service where we intentionally put our faith into action. God has blessed us in many ways therefore we want to be a blessing to those around us. *Overflow* is intended to be both a recognition of those many blessings as well as a season of service for this church.

Your role as a Life Group leader has the potential to be a huge help to contributing to this season of service. Our goal for College Hills is that every member be able to say, "I served during Overflow!" Life Group is an ideal group of people with whom you can participate in one act of service for someone within the church or community.

Please be brainstorming ideas and looking for opportunities where you can serve as a group. More details will be coming in the next edition of the Life Group guide.

Thanks for your leadership here at College Hills!

Peace,
Wilson

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