



Week 8 | Slaves No More | June 21, 2015

Opening Up:

If you were stranded on a desert island away from your family, what two non-family members would you want to be there with you? Why?

What does community provide that loneliness can not?

What does community provide in faith that solitude cannot?

Reference: Exodus 19:2-8; 20:1-3; 24:7-11

Discuss:

1. Isaiah 49:15 talks about God's maternal love. It can be argued that we need all acceptance and accountability in our lives with a voice that says, "I love you" and a voice that says, "I believe in you." Moms and dads can provide these voices. Why are both important? What happens if you take away belief or love?
2. When you think about God, do you see him being more about the law or more about love? How has your view of God changed over time?
3. Exodus 19:4-6 tells us that God rescued Israel before he gave the law. Why is the pattern of love before law important? How does it change how you see God and others?
4. When you hear that "all Christian obedience is what we do to make God smile," do you agree with this? How does that idea shape you see the law of God?
5. In Deuteronomy 7:6-8 we see that God chose Israel not because she was large, but because he loved her. If God chooses you because he loves you and not because you are deserving, how should that shape the nature of our community?
6. Why is grace so counter-intuitive?
7. True love finds its reward in the act of loving not the reward of loving. Have you ever experienced this kind of love? How do you know it when you see it? What does it feel like to be loved without an agenda?
8. In Exodus 19:6 Israel is called to be a holy nation and a kingdom of priests. Paul reiterates this calling on the church in 1 Peter 2:9. We are called to be a community of lovers who love God and love other people. We are representatives of God who form a city on a hill (Matthew 5:14-16). Church is not a collection of individuals, but a community. What should be some markings of the community that God is forming at New City?
9. Jesus was cursed for us so that we can be blessed in him. In what ways should we be laying down our lives for others the way Jesus laid down his life for us?
10. Pray.