



## Week 9 | Slaves No More | June 28, 2015

### Opening Up:

There is a list of adventures below. Choose an (or two) adventure(s) and name someone you would most want to have that adventure with you and someone you would never want on that adventure:

Shark Diving, Around the World Trip, Sky Diving, Sailing the Atlantic, Writing a Novel, 7 Day Fast, Hiking Everest, 30 Day Vow of Silence, Hot Dog Eating Contest, Racing a Nascar, Running with the Bulls, Back Pack Europe, Scuba Dive Great Barrier Reef, Holy Land Tour, Ride a Roller Coaster, Sail the Caribbean, etc.

### Reference: Exodus 33:1-6, 15-23; 24:7-11

### Discuss:

1. Both in Exodus 19 and in 1 Peter 2 we see that God calls us a Holy (or distinct nation), a priesthood, and a people of God's personal possession. What should make the church a distinct people? Why should the church be distinct? What prevents the church from being distinct?
2. Miroslav Volf calls the church's distinction a soft difference. He wrote, *"It looked as if [the church] did not forge her identity through rejection of her social environment, but through the acceptance of God's gift of salvation and its values. She refused to operate within the alternative 'affirmation of the world' versus 'denial of the world,' but surprised people with strange combinations of difference and acculturation. She was sure of her mission to proclaim the mighty deeds of God for the salvation of the world, but refused to use either pressure or manipulation. Rather, she lived fearlessly her soft difference."*  
What do you think about what Volf has written? Do you agree or disagree with Volf? How so?
3. In Deuteronomy 24:18–19 Israel is told to remember what God has done for her so that she can be generous towards most vulnerable of society. How does remembering our salvation help us to live generous lives?

4. Like Israel, says 1 Peter 2:11-12, we are exiles and sojourners. Read Jeremiah 29:6-7. Apply what Jeremiah teaches Israel in their exile. How would translate these verses to a Christian living in today's western American world?
5. Life's best experiences can not be fully appreciated alone. In Exodus 33 God threatens take his presence away. This is devastating news. Would it be devastating news for you to go on without the presence of God? When do you sense God's presence? What difference does God's presence make in your life?
6. John Perkins challenges us offer our presence in the same way that Jesus offered the world his presence in the incarnation. Perkins writes,  
"The concept of relocation is best understood in terms of what we call a **theology of presence**"—a theology that lies at the heart of God's relationship with humanity. The incarnation—God's coming to earth in human form to live and breathe and walk and work and minister among us—illustrates God's desire to be present with those he has created."  
Have you ever shared in God's presence with someone? If so, tell a story. People sometimes say, "I feel God's presence when I am around them?" What does that mean? Who radiates the presence of God most in your life? How so?
7. In Exodus 34:6-7 we see the total grace and total justice of God. On the cross Jesus lost the presence of God, so that you could know his presence. What keeps people from experiencing the presence of God?
8. Pray.