

**AUGUST 8/9, 2020**  
**LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**  
**RAISE YOUR VOICE | SHOW ME**  
**EXODUS 33:12-23**

Hello! This will be the last Leader's Notes email for two weeks as I'll be on vacation. There will still be Discussion Questions, and you can find those by going to [www.efcc.org](http://www.efcc.org), clicking on "Worship Guide," and then scrolling down to "Life Group Questions." Those will be posted by Saturday morning of each week (and so, they are there now). You can also always get the Discussion Questions and Leader's Notes by going to <https://www.efcc.org/life-groups/>, then clicking on "Resources." The Discussion Questions are posted on Fridays and the Leader's Notes on Mondays. And of course, you have my email to you.

This fall Ryan is going to preach through the book of Daniel. He will begin five weeks from today and end the first week of Advent. He is calling the series "Distance Learning."

We are working on promotion ideas for Life Groups for three weeks in late August and early to mid September. I'd love to add people to groups!

For this week, the discipleship value that the text presents to us is that of Pursuit. Out of God's pursuit of Moses, Moses pursues God. Out of God's pursuit of us, we pursue Him. And in that pursuit we focus on Being With Jesus (remember our model is Being With, Becoming Like and Doing As Jesus). In this text, the Pursuit seems to be primarily about knowing God for the sake of knowing God. Moses wants to know God's ways so he can know Him in order to find favor in His sight; Moses wants to know (know = experience) God's glory so that he can know God better. Knowing God is the essence of Moses' prayers to know His ways and be shown His glory.

So, we'll talk about things to Learn and Practice in order that we might grow in our experiential knowledge of God, so that we might know Him better. And, what can be better than knowing God more?

But first, a totally random Icebreaker Question.

### **Engaging with Each Other**

**1. Would you rather travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants? Why?**

While I would be curious to meet my descendants, I am way more curious to meet my ancestors. I want to see where I came from, who first became a Christian, how the sovereignty of God worked itself out in peoples' lives, who it was who first came to America and where they came from and what life was like for them before they came and why they came and what they did where they were before they came. So many questions!

How about for you?

## Engaging with the Scriptures

### 2. There are three things Moses does which allows him to experience the presence of God in his life. What are they and how does each bring a word of encouragement and challenge to you?

I didn't want to put the points in the question and thus give them away ahead of time. So, here they are, along with some thoughts from Ryan.

First, we see Moses reject apathy. If there is a central sin of Jesus followers in the U.S., I believe it might be apathy. Complacency. A settled acceptance of a religious status quo that buzzes with monotony and anoints going through the motions as the pinnacle of religious experience. There are three main ways that we get off track and are lulled into apathy. Let's look at them together.

- The first way is exhibited in this text and its idolatry. When idols fill our hearts, we'll never seek God's presence.
- The second way we see apathy grip us is through faulty theology. There are some people who don't encounter God at deeper levels because they don't expect to do so. I love the way C.S. Lewis put it when he wrote, "It is always shocking to meet life where we thought we were alone. 'Look out!' we cry, 'it's alive'. And therefore this is the very point at which so many draw back—I would have done so myself if I could—and proceed no further with Christianity. An 'impersonal God'—well and good. A subjective God of beauty, truth and goodness, inside our own heads—better still. A formless life-force surging through us, a vast power which we can tap—best of all. But God Himself, alive, pulling at the other end of the cord, perhaps approaching at an infinite speed, the hunter, king, husband—that is quite another matter. There comes a moment when the children who have been playing at burglars hush suddenly: was that a real footstep in the hall? There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion ('Man's search for God!') suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found Him? We never meant it to come to that! Worse still, supposing He had found us?"
- The third way we see apathy grip us is through distraction. The irony is that the glory of God covers the face of the globe (Isaiah 6:3), and yet it is something we have to make room for in our life. One of the main reasons we do not encounter the abundance of God in our lives is because we are already filled with our own personal abundance. The Lord cannot fill what has not first been emptied.

Put simply by Matthew Crawford, "Attention is a resource—a person has only so much of it." Contrast that with what Ezra Klein said, "Life is the sum total of what we pay attention to." Attention is a limited resource that will shape our lives! Are you on the lookout for God? Is he on your mind?

But here's the truth: we are called to be content in our circumstances, and discontent with little of God's presence... but we have it backwards! We're often discontent in our circumstances, and content with little or no experience of God's presence.

First, Moses rejected apathy, but second, we see him request boldly. Jesus calls us to be people who ask boldly believing that God blesses generously.

Asking is a key principle for the spiritual life. I love the way Dallas Willard put it when he wrote, "Asking is indeed the great law of the spiritual world through which things are accomplished in cooperation with God and yet in harmony with the freedom and worth of every individual."

But let me clarify, this week our focus is not on asking God FOR anything, but on seeking his FACE.

So, we see Moses reject apathy, request boldly, and then respond obediently (by pursuing intentionally). Please note that before Moses ever prayed, "show me your glory," he first prayed, "show me your ways" (33:13). Before there is ever revelation of God's presence, there is an intention to obey God's commands!

I love the way that Margaret Feinberg put it, and I'll end with this:

"When we passionately pursue God above all else, the tone and tenacity with which we live our lives changes. Holiness beckons. Divine expectation flourishes. Hope returns. Love abounds. In response, we awaken, toss back the covers, climb out of bed, and drink in the fullness of life God intended for us."

May we become that kind of person. May we become that kind of church.

Reject apathy

- Reject idolatry
- Reject faulty theology
- Reject distraction

Request boldly

Respond obediently

Here is how you might lead this discussion. Spend time talking about each of the three areas individually. First talk about rejecting apathy, then about requesting boldly, then about responding obediently. You can read some of Ryan's by way conversation starters. There is more than enough to talk about. As you lead, consider asking this additional question, "What did you learn, or what were you reminded of, that is important when it comes to .... rejecting apathy ... requesting boldly ... responding obediently?" This gets us talking about the "Learning" component.

Also remember that everything we talk about should be tied back to things we want to learn, or unlearn, in order to seek God's face for the point of knowing Him better. If you can keep that in mind as you lead, and bring that up in the conversation, that will be good. We are learning about and talking about rejecting apathy so that we might know Him better (not so that we might serve Him more or share Him more, etc. Those are solid things, but they aren't this week's thing). Likewise, we are learning about requesting boldly and responding obediently so that we might know Him more, and know Him more just for the sake of knowing Him more!

### Engaging the Scriptures with Life

- 3. Does one of the three seem to stand out as being of more importance than the other two? If so, which one? And why? And what can you do by way of response to work more of it into your life?**

Now we want to talk about practices. First, I'd love for everyone to identify which of the three is most important for them and for where they are in their life right now. Then, are there some things that they'd like to do differently in order to grow closer to God? How can they practice what they have learned?

There is no shortage of things that one can do to reject apathy, request boldly and respond obediently. The challenge for you may be to lead some in your group to think practically about what they will do in order to move forward (and especially if complacency is an issue, because complacency will touch all three of this week's points.)

I could give you a laundry list of things that one could do to reject, request and respond, but I don't sense that's necessary.

I would like to challenge you and myself to try and get everyone in our groups to pick one thing they will do that we can talk about the next time we are together.

Ryan will list some practices at the end of the message that some may want to adopt: weekly prayer on Wednesday evening at EFCC, weekly fasting on Wednesday, signing up to receive The Daily Fill and trying out the Prayer Point that will be at the end of each day's devotional. All of this is optional, of course.

Okay, I trust it will go well and I'll see you in a few weeks.