



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Series Theme: Liberated for Life

Text for the Week: Exodus 19:1-18, 16-19; 20:1-17

Message for the Week: "Liberated for Life"

Week One

Sunday, January 8

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

Tell about a time when you got in trouble as a kid. What did you do and what happened as a result?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Exodus 19:1-8, 16-19](#) and [Exodus 20:1-17](#) out loud.

(Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

Have you ever had an encounter with God that made you tremble?

When you hear the words "Ten Commandments" what words or connotations come to your heart and mind? Are they positive or negative?

How does your perception of the law of God change when we understand that God gave us this instruction for our benefit?

Are there places in your life where you are living in bondage?

What other than the Lord our God have you put your faith, hope, and trust in?

What are the idols of our day?

"Try It!"

In Deuteronomy 6, God reminds us that His commandments are "...to be on our hearts..." and that we should "...impress them on our children..." and that we should "...talk about them when we sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

This week, how can you go about impressing God and God's instruction on your own heart and life and those around you?

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father, God, the One and only, thank you for your grace and mercy. You have redeemed us and released us from the power of sin and the temptations that so easily lead us astray. As we live out the days you have ordained for us, help us to live in such a way that your name alone will be praised and honored. Give us spiritual courage to flee from all that would distract us and turn us away from you. To you alone belongs all the glory. AMEN

Missional/Spiritual Practice for January: Making Room

During the month of January, you are invited and encouraged to engage in the missional practice of [Making Room](#). How do we make room? Each week, intentionally and prayerfully record and reflect on your purchases and time spent. Seek the Spirit's guidance in what you can eliminate to make room (i.e. increase your capacity) to deepen your ministry and share with others. "It is easy to say no when there is a deeper yes burning within" – Richard Foster

Consider repeating this practice weekly or several times a month. Invite several friends to join you in this practice and commit to sharing your decisions and experiences together. Support one another in prayer.

19 On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. ²After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

³Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ⁴‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

⁷So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the Lord had commanded him to speak. ⁸The people all responded together, “We will do everything the Lord has said.” So Moses brought their answer back to the Lord.

¹⁶On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. ¹⁷Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain^(a) trembled violently. ¹⁹As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.^(b)

20 And God spoke all these words: ²“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ³“You shall have no other gods before^(a) me. ⁴“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹²“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

¹³“You shall not murder.

¹⁴“You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵“You shall not steal.

¹⁶“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

The Message

19 ¹⁻² Three months after leaving Egypt the Israelites entered the Wilderness of Sinai. They followed the route from Rephidim, arrived at the Wilderness of Sinai, and set up camp. Israel camped there facing the mountain.

³⁻⁶ As Moses went up to meet God, God called down to him from the mountain: "Speak to the House of Jacob, tell the People of Israel: 'You have seen what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to me. If you will listen obediently to what I say and keep my covenant, out of all peoples you'll be my special treasure. The whole Earth is mine to choose from, but you're special: a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.'

"This is what I want you to tell the People of Israel."

⁷ Moses came back and called the elders of Israel together and set before them all these words which God had commanded him.

⁸ The people were unanimous in their response: "Everything God says, we will do." Moses took the people's answer back to God.

¹⁶ On the third day at daybreak, there were loud claps of thunder, flashes of lightning, a thick cloud covering the mountain, and an ear-piercing trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp shuddered in fear.

¹⁷ Moses led the people out of the camp to meet God. They stood at attention at the base of the mountain.

¹⁸⁻²⁰ Mount Sinai was all smoke because God had come down on it as fire. Smoke poured from it like smoke from a furnace. The whole mountain shuddered and heaved. The trumpet blasts grew louder and louder. Moses spoke and God answered in thunder. God descended to the peak of Mount Sinai. God called Moses up to the peak and Moses climbed up.

20 ¹⁻² God spoke all these words: I am God, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a life of slavery.

³ No other gods, only me.

⁴⁻⁶ No carved gods of any size, shape, or form of anything whatever, whether of things that fly or walk or swim. Don't bow down to them and don't serve them because I am God, your God, and I'm a most jealous God, punishing the children for any sins their parents pass on to them to the third, and yes, even to the fourth generation of those who hate me. But I'm unswervingly loyal to the thousands who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ No using the name of God, your God, in curses or silly banter; God won't put up with the irreverent use of his name.

⁸⁻¹¹ Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Work six days and do everything you need to do. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to God, your God. Don't do any work—not you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your servant, nor your maid, nor your animals, not even the foreign guest visiting in your town. For in six days God made Heaven, Earth, and sea, and everything in them; he rested on the seventh day. Therefore God blessed the Sabbath day; he set it apart as a holy day.

¹² Honor your father and mother so that you'll live a long time in the land that God, your God, is giving you.

¹³ No murder.

¹⁴ No adultery.

¹⁵ No stealing.

¹⁶ No lies about your neighbor.

¹⁷ No lusting after your neighbor's house—or wife or servant or maid or ox or donkey. Don't set your heart on anything that is your neighbor's.

Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 94

Q. What does the Lord require in the first commandment?

A. That I, not wanting to endanger my own salvation, avoid and shun all idolatry,¹ sorcery, superstitious rites,² and prayer to saints or to other creatures.³

That I rightly know the only true God,⁴ trust him alone,⁵ and look to God for every good thing⁶ humbly⁷ and patiently,⁸ and love,⁹ fear,¹⁰ and honor¹¹ God with all my heart.

In short, that I give up anything rather than go against God's will in any way.¹²

¹ [1 Cor. 6:9-10; 10:5-14; 1 John 5:21](#)

² [Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9-12](#)

³ [Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9](#)

⁴ [John 17:3](#)

⁵ [Jer. 17:5, 7](#)

⁶ [Ps. 104:27-28; James 1:17](#)

⁷ [1 Pet. 5:5-6](#)

⁸ [Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:36](#)

⁹ [Matt. 22:37 \(Deut. 6:5\)](#)

¹⁰ [Prov. 9:10; 1 Pet. 1:17](#)

¹¹ [Matt. 4:10 \(Deut. 6:13\)](#)

¹² [Matt. 5:29-30; 10:37-39](#)

Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 95

Q. What is idolatry?

A. Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in the Word.¹

¹ [1 Chron. 16:26; Gal. 4:8-9; Eph. 5:5; Phil. 3:19](#)