

## Small Group Discussion Guide — October 10, 2021

- Series: En Route
  - Sermon: The Ancient Paths
  - Scripture: Exodus 20: 1-17
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### FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK

What were some moments in this past week when you noticed you were carrying more than you should? What steps did you take to “travel lightly” and let Jesus carry your burden?

### CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from this past week’s service, and why?
2. What is a place you used to go as a child or young person when you needed to ground yourself and breathe? What was it about that place that helped you?

### ENGAGE

Read Exodus 20: 1-17.

1. What do you think “idol” means in modern terms? How might we recognize idols in our own lives? What are some good things that we might put before God, and how might they become idols for us?
2. Given your response above, how might you paraphrase the first three commandments (v. 3-7) in your own words? Why might these commandments be the starting point for all of the commandments? What shift do you see in verses 12-17?
3. What is the suggested rationale for the Sabbath? What is your relationship to this commandment? How does this relate to verse 3?

### APPLY

1. What are your thoughts when you hear “The Ten Commandments”? In our current culture of deconstruction (where everything seems to be breaking down or devolving in some sense), what is the value of these ancient laws? How relevant do they seem to you in our modern world? Are there any that seem outdated or impossible? How do you treat those that do?
2. Read Psalm 119:91-92. We often think of freedom as having complete authority and choice over all our decisions, but “real freedom lives in the blessed confines of obedience.”\* How might unbridled freedom, without any confines or restraints lead to trouble? What does it mean for God’s law to be “our delight?”
3. What are your current captivities (perspectives, practices, mindsets) that God would call you out of so you can really live? Does it scare you to leave these? If so, why?

### PRAYER

Dear caring Father, How often I put my faith, not in you, but in the very gifts that you have given to me - my mind and body that you have beautifully made, the job and the financial security you have provided, my family and my friends which you have given to comfort me. Too often, I allow these gifts to become my idols, and turn my eyes toward them and away from you. Too often I reject your instructions for living a full and meaningful life. Forgive me, dear Father. How grateful I am for your inexhaustible grace. For giving me your very Son, so gentle and humble in heart, and for the rest He offers. Help me to accept your easy yoke, day in and day out. Amen

## **GOING DEEPER**

Read Jeremiah 6:10. David suggested that, taken together, the commandments provide the guideposts to help us come closer to God - to be close enough to hear His voice more clearly, perhaps. How does keeping God's commandments bring us closer, and how might rejecting his commandments move us further away from Him, and make his voice harder to discern? If coming closer brings goodness, meaning, value, dignity, love and sanity, what might running from God bring into our lives?

## **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE**

Jeremiah 6: 16

Psalms 119: 91-92

Matthew 1: 28-30

John 10:10

## **QUOTES**

"Desire is good, but when you want something too much, it threatens to take God's place in your life. It will lead you to make bad decisions. It will put you on an emotional roller coaster. The ability to have anything you want actually can cost you your freedom."

*John Ortberg*

"I bless you prison - I bless you for being in my life, for there lying on rotting prison straw, I learned the object of life is not prosperity as I had grown up believing, but the maturing of the soul."

*Alexander Solzhenitsyn*

"The love God has for the world has enormous consequences in the lives we live every day. And the consequences are all happy: 'not perish. . . have eternal life. . . not condemned. . . saved...' The practical result of God's love for the world is that we get what he has. We share the life of God himself. His love works, and it makes something happen. It is creative. It is redemptive. It changes things - anger into joy, fear into peace. Jesus's comprehensive phrase is 'eternal life.'"

*Eugene Peterson*

"Every time I obey, the absolute deity of God is on my side, so that the grace of God and my natural obedience are in perfect agreement. Obedience means that I have completely placed my trust in the atonement, and my obedience is immediately met by the delight of the supernatural grace of God."

*Oswald Chambers*

"The life in Christ is unique -- you are not fitting into someone else's mold, meeting anyone's expectations, or trying to conform to a model. You will become more yourself and less like anyone else in the whole world as you do this."

*Eugene Peterson*