

## THE LONG WAY AROUND

### THE PASSAGE

Exodus 13:17-22

### LESSONS FROM THE JOURNEY:

**(1)** God's path is always **EASY TO FIND**.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 Psalm 119:1 & 105-106 John 16:7 & 13 James 1:5 Matthew 6:33

**(2)** It's not always the path we **WOULD CHOOSE**.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Isaiah 55:8

**(3)** The journey may be **LONGER THAN EXPECTED**.

2 Peter 3:8-9 Isaiah 40:30-31 Psalm 130:5-6 Micah 7:7

**(4)** The long way always leads **HOME**.

Romans 8:18 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 Philippians 3:20-21 Revelation 7:13-17 & 21:4-8

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 21, 2016

## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back over your notes, what did you find most helpful, challenging or interesting in this week's teaching?

## MY STORY

1. This week we heard the "long way around" is sometimes definitely the better way to go, even though it may not make sense. Do you have any illustrations in your own life of this happening?

2. What was your first response to Mike's statement, "God's path is always easy to find"?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. This weekend Mike illustrated how the Bible is like our spiritual GPS (God Positioning System) and similar to how the Israelites followed the cloud and pillar out of Egypt. Our access to Scripture within our culture is amazing when you consider that we can access it almost instantly anywhere due to the Internet. Yet "access" doesn't always equal "accuracy" as verses can easily be taken out of context. One of the best ways to guarantee that we are properly interpreting any verse or passage is to compare it with the rest of the Bible. Read the verses below and answer the question in each column.

What does the passage say?	Fuller context/meaning?
<b>Philippians 4:13</b> <i>New International Version (NIV)</i> <sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength.	<b>Philippians 4:10-12</b> <i>New International Version (NIV)</i> <i>Thanks for Their Gifts</i> <sup>10</sup> I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. <sup>11</sup> I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. <sup>12</sup> I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.
<b>Matthew 7:1</b> <i>New International Version (NIV)</i> <i>Judging Others</i> <sup>1</sup> "Do not judge, or you too will be judged.	<b>Matthew 7:2-6</b> <i>New International Version (NIV)</i> <sup>2</sup> For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup> "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. <sup>6</sup> "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

<p><b>Joshua 1:8</b> <i>New International Version (NIV)</i></p> <p><sup>8</sup> Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.</p>	<p><b>Hebrews 11:32-40</b> <i>New International Version (NIV)</i></p> <p><sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— <sup>38</sup> the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground.</p> <p><sup>39</sup> These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, <sup>40</sup> since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.</p>
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**2.** There's nothing wrong with considering and taking the short road. In fact, in many cases it is the best decision. But as we've heard this weekend, the long road should be considered as it may be far and above the better decision. Peter, one of the twelve disciples, encountered a number of situations where he needed to consider either the short path or the long path. As you read the passages below, jot down what Peter's short path or "long way around" options were and any other similarities you see from the Israelites' situation we studied this week.

**Mark 8:31-33** *New International Version (NIV)*  
*Jesus Predicts His Death*

<sup>31</sup> He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

<sup>33</sup> But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

**John 18:1-13** *New International Version (NIV)*  
*Jesus Arrested*

<sup>1</sup> When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.

<sup>2</sup> Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some

officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

<sup>5</sup> "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) <sup>6</sup> When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

<sup>7</sup> Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

<sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go." <sup>9</sup> This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

<sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

<sup>11</sup> Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

<sup>12</sup> Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him <sup>13</sup> and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

**Acts 4:3-13** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>3</sup> They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. <sup>4</sup> But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

<sup>5</sup> The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. <sup>7</sup> They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! <sup>9</sup> If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, <sup>10</sup> then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. <sup>11</sup> Jesus is

"the stone you builders rejected,  
which has become the cornerstone.'

<sup>12</sup> Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

<sup>13</sup> When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

What might be some examples of short cuts versus long roads we need to consider when it comes to...

- ⇒ Our relationships
- ⇒ Dealing with conflict
- ⇒ How we work
- ⇒ Time with God
- ⇒ Other

**3. The enemy wants us to keep thinking following God is complicated. How do the following verses keep it simple for all of those who say they are followers of Jesus?**

**Matthew 22:34-39** *New International Version (NIV)*

*The Greatest Commandment*

<sup>34</sup> Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. <sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: <sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

**1 Thessalonians 4:11-12** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>11</sup> and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, <sup>12</sup> so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

**2 Peter 1:3-5** *New International Version (NIV)*

*Confirming One's Calling and Election*

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

<sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;

Which of these verses is most helpful to you when it comes to keeping it simple?

**TAKING IT HOME**

Is there anything from this week's sermon or study that you need to remember or apply?

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Prayer Requests:

