

THIS WEEK

THIS SUNDAY 10/29

Communion
No HS Sunday School
Shape Seminar, 4 pm RWCC

FRIDAY 11/3

High School Girls Sleepover, 8pm RWLG.
Contact Crystal Roseberry in the office

Friday Night Fellowship (4th & 5th graders), 7pm at the Anderson's home.
Contact Lindsie Bailey in the office

SUNDAY 11/5

El Salvador Presentation & Taco Feed,
7 pm RWLG. Contact Gerry Friesen at
699.8712

UPCOMING

SUNDAY 11/12

All Church Brunch, 11:30am-1:30 RWLG
Contact Mary Halvorson in the office

SATURDAY 11/18

3rd Saturday Ministry Prayer, 8am RWLG
Contact Tina Anderson in the office

SUNDAY 11/19

Introducing River West, noon at Pastor
Guy's Home @ 18123 Westview Dr, LO.
Light lunch provided

2007 Israel Trip Info Meeting, 7:30pm
RWCC. Contact Tina Anderson in the
office

Cover Photo: Raymundo and Jose, villagers in Nuevo Renacer on our October mission trip. Jose's family is living on the land and Raymundo looks forward to moving his family onto the land when the water comes in the winter.

RIVER WEST GREENTREE: 1595 Greentree Road, Lake Oswego, OR 97034
RIVER WEST LAKE GROVE: 15751 SW Quarry Road, Lake Oswego, OR 97035
OFFICES/COMMUNITY CENTER: 16148 Boones Ferry Rd., Lake Oswego, OR 97035
phone 503.699.2226 / **fax** 503.697.9663 / **email** info@riverwest

NOTES

RIVER WEST CHURCH

Building a Community
of Christ for the World



next
step | 10.29.2006
www.riverwest.org

WELCOME

Open your heart. Engage your mind. Together with others, reach for something real, deep and lasting. Come with your hurts, hopes, joys and fears. Expect something good, challenging and different. Here's why: Jesus Christ is alive and present with us as we gather to worship, pray and love one another in his name. That's what we believe! That's why we have come today.

At River West our mission is to build a community of Christ for the world. As we focus on Him in worship and the teaching of the Word, our prayer is that we will sense His presence and respond to His love. Life flows from this! To be in community means to share something in common with others. It is our shared faith in Jesus Christ that creates our sense of fellowship with Him and each other & from that flows our desire to share His love and grace with our community and world.

Our worship gathering is an important expression of our shared faith and life. But true community is built in other important ways as well. At the heart of our mission is what we call our Community Groups. These groups allow us to build relationships and grow deeper in our faith in Christ. For more information about various Community Groups call Pastor Adam at the church office.

Contact Pastor Josh regarding Student Ministry & Youth Groups for kids from 6th grade through High School. Our Children's Ministry Director, Lindsie Bailey would love to talk to you about fun stuff for kids at River West!

RESPOND

Visitor? Need info updated in the directory? Want to sign up for something? Give us your info:

Name: _____

Children's names: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Best contact phone: _____

Which service do you attend? 8:45am 10am 11am 5:30pm

Sign me up for _____

Comments, questions, interests _____

Add/Update me in the directory

Freedom, Identity & Purpose: The Gospel of Christ in Exodus

Exodus 5 / Pastor Guy Gray

Faith - The Word of the LORD believed and proclaimed

Exodus 5:1 is a high point. What an incredible step of radical faith. A key to the meaning of this moment is the expression that Moses uses: "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says..." When we see this expression in the Bible, we are put on alert that the message which follows is beyond the word of a mere man or woman; it is the actual Word of the living God. This Word of God has all the authority and power of almighty God Himself behind it. This is the same Word by which the heavens and the earth were created (Genesis 1:1-3; Psalm 33:1-12). God says that His Word will never return empty, but will accomplish the purpose for which he sends it forth (Isaiah 55:8-11). Moses believes this and so he speaks (see 2 Cor. 4:13)! Take note: the strength of our Christian life is rooted in the conviction that 1) God's Word is truly a creative force, because He stands behind it in 100% in

faithfulness and power. 2) God really has revealed His will, His purpose, His Word to us and it should be celebrated and proclaimed. 3) This is true regardless of the immediate or apparent outcome of believing or speaking His Word. But this is where the trouble begins in the chapter.

Doubt - The Word of the LORD challenged

The reaction of Pharaoh is an immediate, violent challenge and rejection. It seems that this caught Moses of guard. We see Moses apparently "back pedaling" - softening his statements. Perhaps Moses was so awestruck by all that had happened in his life - so filled with faith and enthusiasm at that moment, that he expected a different reaction from Pharaoh. It is interesting that in Exodus 5:10 the exact phrase used of the Word of God in 5:1 is used of Pharaoh: "This is what Pharaoh says..." And so we see the pattern that has existed ever since. There is always some "authority," or "expert" who

is ready to make a definitive pronouncement which is exactly the opposite of what we have come to believe. And the word of challenge or contradiction can come with unexpected power and authority. It is easy to get discouraged as the challenge to your faith in The Word of the LORD hits hard.

Discouragement - The Word of the LORD overshadowed by "real life"

Take note of Exodus 5:9. "Let the labor be heavier on the men, and let them work at it that they may pay no attention to false words." (NASB). Pharaoh's challenge isn't just intellectual - it gets physical. He piles on the work. He intends to keep the people so caught up in the grind of everyday life that they will literally have no time or energy for the promises of the Word of God. Sometimes the issues of "real life" can be so immediate, so pressing, so all consuming that the promises of God can seem like "lying words" irrelevant, idealistic, intangible, out of touch. What we want is just to make it through the day or the week, not some abstract idealistic religious jargon about "freedom, identity, purpose, meaning, salvation," etc. . . . And so spiritual discouragement sets in and we begin to let go of the hope and the promises of God's Word.

Renewal - A return to the LORD who gave the Word

But the story isn't over yet. Moses doesn't give up. This is a crucial moment: Moses "returns to the LORD." (5:22). Through prayer he seeks an answer from God that will move him forward. What he learns is all important: It really is going to take a miracle of God to see the plan of God unfold and God is going to deliver that miracle. This is the reality of the Gospel. It actually does require a miracle of God. And God delivers. He raised Christ from the dead. He birthed the early church against all odds. He saves and changes lives. But it is all against very real opposition. So hang on to your faith at all costs - through all the pressure of life. God's Word is true and he is not through working in miraculous ways.

Questions for Further Personal Reflection & Group Discussion

Read Exodus 5:1-6:1 again.

What initial observations do you make from this passage? Jot down anything that impacted you or you thought was significant?

What is Pharaoh's opinion of the sincerity of Moses' and Aaron's request (5:4-5)? How does Pharaoh deal with this irritation (5:6 -9)

The Lord's message is "Let my people go" (5:1). What challenge to Pharaoh's authority does this imply?

In complaining to Pharaoh, the Israelite foremen refer to themselves as "your servants" (5:15-16). Do the foremen look at things the way the Lord does? Explain.

What accusations do the foremen level at Moses and Aaron (5:19-21)? Explain in your own words. To what degree is this accusation accurate?

Of what does Moses then accuse God (5:22-23)? How does the Lord deal with Moses' complaint (6:1)?

Digging Deeper

Have you ever been in a situation where you took a stand for Jesus Christ or shared the Gospel and were met with challenge or flat out rejection? Describe how that felt? How did it impact your faith?

There are times in our lives where we need a miracle from God to move forward. Moses experienced such a situation in Exodus 5. Describe a time in your own life where the miraculous hand of God was needed. How did God show up?