

Original Message: Sunday, June 30th, 2024

[Unhappy Endings- Tower of Babel \[Significance\]](#)

Read Genesis 11:1-9

Discuss

- **Unity and Ambition** - What were the people trying to achieve by building the Tower of Babel? How did their unity and common language contribute to their ambition?
- **God's Intervention** - Why did God decide to confuse the people's language and scatter them? What does this tell us about God's perspective on human ambition and self-sufficiency?
- **Creative Obedience** - How might we become "too creative" with our obedience to God, similar to the people building the Tower of Babel? What are some examples in scripture or in our lives where obedience was compromised by human creativity or ambition?
- **Self-Sufficiency vs. Surrender** - How does the story of Babel illustrate the dangers of self-sufficiency? In what ways do we often move towards self-sufficiency instead of surrendering to God's will?
- **Earning vs. Receiving** How do we sometimes try to earn our way to God rather than simply receiving His grace?

Stretch

- How do you respond when God intervenes in your plans or ambitions?
- What steps can you take to better recognize and accept God's interventions as part of His loving plan?
- How can you cultivate a deeper trust in God's timing and methods, especially when your plans are disrupted?
- What daily practices can help you surrender your will to God and avoid the pitfalls of self-sufficiency?
- Reflect on the difference between trying to earn God's favor and receiving His grace.
- How does understanding and accepting God's grace change your perspective on success and significance?

Go Deeper - Read Acts 2:1-13

Many Bible scholars view the miracle of tongues at Pentecost as a re-write or restoration of the broken story of Babel. Discuss connections you see. How were people, circumstances, and purpose similar in both of these examples? How were they different? What do you notice about obedience & surrender in both texts?

Original Message: Sunday, June 23rd, 2024

[Unhappy Endings-Guest Speaker Lisette Fraser \[Hagar\]](#)

Read Genesis 16

Discuss

Sarai's Plan and Its Consequences:

- In what ways have you experienced the consequences of taking matters into your own hands instead of waiting for God's timing?
- How can we cultivate patience and trust in God's promises, even when they seem delayed?

Hagar's Obedience:

- How did Hagar's situation change after she obeyed the angel's instruction to return to Sarai?
- Share an instance where obeying God did not lead to immediate success or relief. How did it shape your faith and character?

Challenges of Obedience:

- How can we remain faithful and obedient even when our circumstances do not improve or become more challenging?

Seeing God in Our Struggles:

- Hagar named God "El Roi" (The God who sees me). Share how recognizing God's presence and care in your struggles has provided comfort or guidance.

Living with Unresolved Tensions:

- What lessons can we learn from Hagar about living with unresolved tensions and ongoing difficulties?

Trusting God's Bigger Plan:

- How can we keep our focus on God's promises and character rather than our current circumstances?

Obedience and Humility:

- How can we practice humility in our obedience, acknowledging that our version of success might differ from God's plan?
- What practical steps can we take to align our desires and actions more closely with God's will?

Encouraging Each Other in Obedience:

- What role does community play in helping us to see and trust in God's plan when we feel discouraged?

Read more about Hagar's story: Genesis 21:8-21

Discover Hagar's story in Paul's writings: Galatians 4:21-31

[Original Message: Sunday, June 16th, 2024](#)

Unhappy Endings- Korah [Authority]

Discuss

- Numbers 16:1-3 : What were the main accusations Korah and his followers made against Moses and Aaron? How did Korah and his followers justify their rebellion, and what does this reveal about their understanding of God's calling?
- Numbers 16:8-11: How did Moses address Korah and the Levites regarding their special role and their desire for more power? What does Moses' response tell us about the true nature of their rebellion?
- Numbers 16:12-14 : How did Dathan and Abiram respond to Moses' summons, and what grievances did they express? What do their complaints reveal about their perspective on their journey from Egypt and their current situation?
- Numbers 16:28-33 - What was the test Moses proposed to prove his divine appointment, and what happened as a result? How did the unusual death of Korah and his followers serve as a sign to the rest of Israel?
- 1 Peter 2:13-18 - According to Peter, why should believers submit to human authorities? How does Peter's teaching in this passage relate to the story of Korah's rebellion?

Stretch:

1. Resisting Authority (Numbers 16:1-3)
 - What are some modern examples of resisting authority, and what motivates such actions?
 - How can we discern when resistance is justified versus when it is a result of pride or selfishness?
2. Honoring Authority (Numbers 16:8-11, 1 Peter 2:13-18)
 - How can we cultivate a habit of honoring authority figures in our lives, even when we disagree with them?
 - What practical steps can we take to show proper respect to all authorities, as Peter instructs?
 - How does trusting in the Lord empower us to live in submission to authorities, both good and harsh?
3. Reliance on the Lord (Numbers 16:28-30)
 - How does reliance on God's sovereignty help us honor and submit to authority?
 - Can you share a personal experience where trusting in God's plan helped you navigate a difficult situation with authority?
4. Gratitude for God's Order (Numbers 16:12-14, 1 Peter 2:15-17)
 - How can we develop an attitude of gratitude for the structure and order that God has placed in our lives?
5. Avoiding Contempt (Numbers 16:30-33)
 - What are some signs that we might be harboring contempt for authority, and how can we address it?
 - How can we ensure that our actions towards authority figures are motivated by faith and respect rather than rebellion?

Original Message: Sunday, June 9th, 2024

Unhappy Endings- Lazarus

Discuss:

1. John 11:11-15 - How did the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' statement reflect their limited understanding of His power over death?
2. John 11:17-22 - What does Martha's response to Jesus reveal about her faith? How does Jesus' declaration, "Your brother will rise again," challenge or affirm Martha's belief?
3. John 11:23-27 - What is the significance of Jesus stating, "I am the resurrection and the life"? How does Martha's confession of faith in verse 27 highlight her understanding of Jesus' identity?
4. John 11:32-37 - How do Mary's words to Jesus echo those of Martha, and what does this suggest about their faith? Why is Jesus deeply moved and troubled when He sees Mary and the others weeping?
5. Psalm 88:9 - How does this imagery the depth of grief? In what ways can this psalm relate to the feelings of Mary, Martha, and those mourning Lazarus?
6. John 11:40 - How does Jesus' statement set the stage for the miracle?

Old Testament Connection: Read **2 Kings 4: 18-37** & discuss the connections outlined below.

1. **Death and Desperation:**
 - The Shunammite woman's son dies suddenly, much like Lazarus. Both stories involve a sudden and unexpected death.
 - Both women, the Shunammite and Martha, express deep grief and a sense of lost hope upon the death of their loved ones.
2. **Seeking Help:**
 - The Shunammite woman seeks out Elisha, the man of God, for help. Similarly, Martha and Mary seek Jesus, the Son of God, for help.
 - In both cases, the women show great faith in the power of God's representatives to bring life.
3. **Demonstration of Faith:**
 - The Shunammite woman travels a great distance to find Elisha, showing her faith in his ability to help her son.
 - Martha expresses her faith in Jesus, saying, "But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask" (John 11:22).
4. **Resurrection:**
 - Elisha prays and physically interacts with the child, leading to his resurrection.
 - Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb with a command, resulting in Lazarus's resurrection.
5. **Witnesses to the Miracle:**

- In both accounts, there are witnesses to the miraculous event, which strengthens the faith of those who see it.
- The resurrection leads to a deeper belief in the power of God

Original Message: Sunday, June 2nd, 2024

[Unhappy Endings- Ananias & Sapphira](#)

Discuss:

- **Acts 5:1-2** - What was the main sin committed by Ananias and Sapphira according to this passage?
- **Acts 5:3-4** - What does this passage suggest about the seriousness of deceit within the Christian community?
- **Acts 5:5-6** - How did the community react to Ananias's sudden death, and why?
- **Acts 5:7-9** - What is the significance of Peter's question to Sapphira and her response? What does this reveal about the apostles' approach to sin and repentance?
- **Acts 5:10-11** - What does this story teach us about the consequences of testing the Spirit of the Lord?
- **Luke 12:4-7** - How does Jesus' teaching in Luke 12:4-7 relate to the fear experienced by the early church in Acts 5? What is the difference between fearing God and fearing other people, according to this passage?

Stretch:

- **Realizing the Weight of Sin (Acts 5:3)**
 - How can we be vigilant against allowing sin to take root in our hearts?
 - In what ways do we sometimes deceive ourselves or others about our true intentions and actions?
- **Recognizing God's Mercy (Acts 5:5)**
 - Despite the severe consequences for Ananias and Sapphira, how can we see God's mercy in the larger context of the gospel?
 - How should our understanding of God's mercy influence our daily lives and decisions?
- **Learning to Fear the Lord (Acts 5:10-11, Luke 12:4-7)**
 - What does it mean to fear the Lord in a healthy and constructive way?
 - How can a proper fear of the Lord help us overcome the fear of worldly concerns and pressures?
- **The Impact of Sin on the Community**
 - How does individual sin impact the larger faith community, and what can we learn from the early church's response to Ananias and Sapphira?
 - How can we foster a culture of honesty and accountability within our own communities?
- **God's Knowledge and Care (Luke 12:6-7)**

- How does knowing that God values us and knows every detail about our lives provide comfort and assurance?
- In what practical ways can we remind ourselves of God's intimate knowledge and care for us when facing challenges or fears?