

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Sermon Series: *Exodus: From Slavery to Freedom #11*

Exodus 18

YOUTH SUNDAY

November 17, 2019

Sermon Theme/Concept:

This Sunday, we highlight one of Trinity's core values, Passing the Baton, as we examine how Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, exhorted him to look beyond himself as the sole representative between God and the Israelites, and learn to delegate. Jethro's example shows several key aspects of what a spiritual mentor looks like, and we learn that (1) Mentors Care, (2) Mentors Commit to their faith, (3) Mentors Come Alongside, and (4) Mentors Challenge.

Application: By God's grace, we choose to:

- 1.) Take action and mentor others
- 2.) Humbly accept and apply wisdom by being mentored

Icebreaker:

1. Who was your first mentor—spiritual, educational, career, or otherwise? How did that person impact your life? Are you still in contact with them? If you could tell that mentor one thing now, what would it be?

Reflections on the Sermon:

Looking back at your notes from the message and the speakers from Youth Sunday, what point struck home with you?

Scripture Passage: Exodus 18 (NIV)

Background/Context: After God delivers the Israelites from Egypt, and miraculously provides for their, God's people remain in the wilderness, where Moses's father-in-law, Jethro, meets them. Jethro was not a direct witness to the miracles God performed in Egypt, but has heard of what transpired.

Exodus 18 (NIV) (Read this passage together as a group)

<p>18 Now Jethro, the priest of Midian and father-in-law of Moses, heard of everything God had done for Moses and for his people Israel, and how the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. 2 After Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro received her 3 and her two sons. One son was named Gershom, for Moses said, "I have become a</p>
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foreigner in a foreign land"; **4** and the other was named Eliezer, for he said, "My father's God was my helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh."

5 Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, together with Moses' sons and wife, came to him in the wilderness, where he was camped near the mountain of God. **6** Jethro had sent word to him, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons."

7 So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and bowed down and kissed him. They greeted each other and then went into the tent. **8** Moses told his father-in-law about everything the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake and about all the hardships they had met along the way and how the Lord had saved them.

9 Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the Lord had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians. **10** He said, "Praise be to the Lord, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh, and who rescued the people from the hand of the Egyptians. **11** Now I know that the Lord is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly." **12** Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and other sacrifices to God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God.

13 The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. **14** When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?"

15 Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will. **16** Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and instructions."

17 Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. **18** You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. **19** Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. **20** Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to

live and how they are to behave. **21** But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. **22** Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. **23** If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.”

24 Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. **25** He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. **26** They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves.

27 Then Moses sent his father-in-law on his way, and Jethro returned to his own country.

Breaking Down the Scripture:

1. What key detail of mentorship is shown in verses 5-6? What can we learn from Jethro’s decision to travel to where Moses was staying?
2. What does verse 11 reveal about Jethro’s faith journey? How is this different in verse 12?
3. What part of verse 20 lays the necessary foundation for Moses to share leadership with others?
4. What would you say is the key phrase in verse 23, and why? Is this a principle you apply in your own life?
5. What character traits does Moses demonstrate in verse 24? Why are these traits important for someone being mentored?
6. What do we learn from verse 27 about Jethro’s return home? How is this instructive for our leaders today?

Going Deeper

1. Jethro was already uniquely positioned to act as a mentor to Moses, but not all mentorships are the outgrowth of an existing relationship. What are some relationships that might naturally evolve into mentorships? If you don’t find yourself in such a relationship, how might you seek a mentor (or a mentee)?
2. Is there a relationship in your life that seems ripe for mentorship? How can this group come alongside you and support you as you take steps to cultivate that mentorship relationship?

3. Do you find it curious that Moses had already experienced and achieved so much, but still was willing to listen to, and ultimately follow, Jethro's advice? What does this tell us about whether mentorship is confined to a certain season of life?
4. A key aspect of mentorship involves active listening, on the part of both parties, as demonstrated in verses 8-9. What does active listening look like? Do your listening skills need honing?
5. Mentorship sometimes requires giving hard advice. How are you at delivering that type of advice? At receiving it?
6. Jethro encouraged Moses to teach the people how they were to live in light of God's instruction (verse 20). Are there areas in which you feel you need a better understanding of the way in which we are to live and how we are to behave?
7. How might you apply verse 22 in your own life? In what areas might you need to share your workload?
8. One of Trinity's core values is "Passing the Baton," which is evidenced in this passage from Exodus. How do you see us demonstrating that as a congregation? How are you personally "Passing the Baton" to others?
9. Is there an area in your life where you are hearing God's call to take the baton?

Pray:

- For the hearts and minds of the next generation;
- For the Lord to raise up leaders from the younger generations;
- For the leaders, teachers, pastors, and parents of our youth, that they may be wholly devoted to the Lord, and lead exemplary lives worthy of their calling.