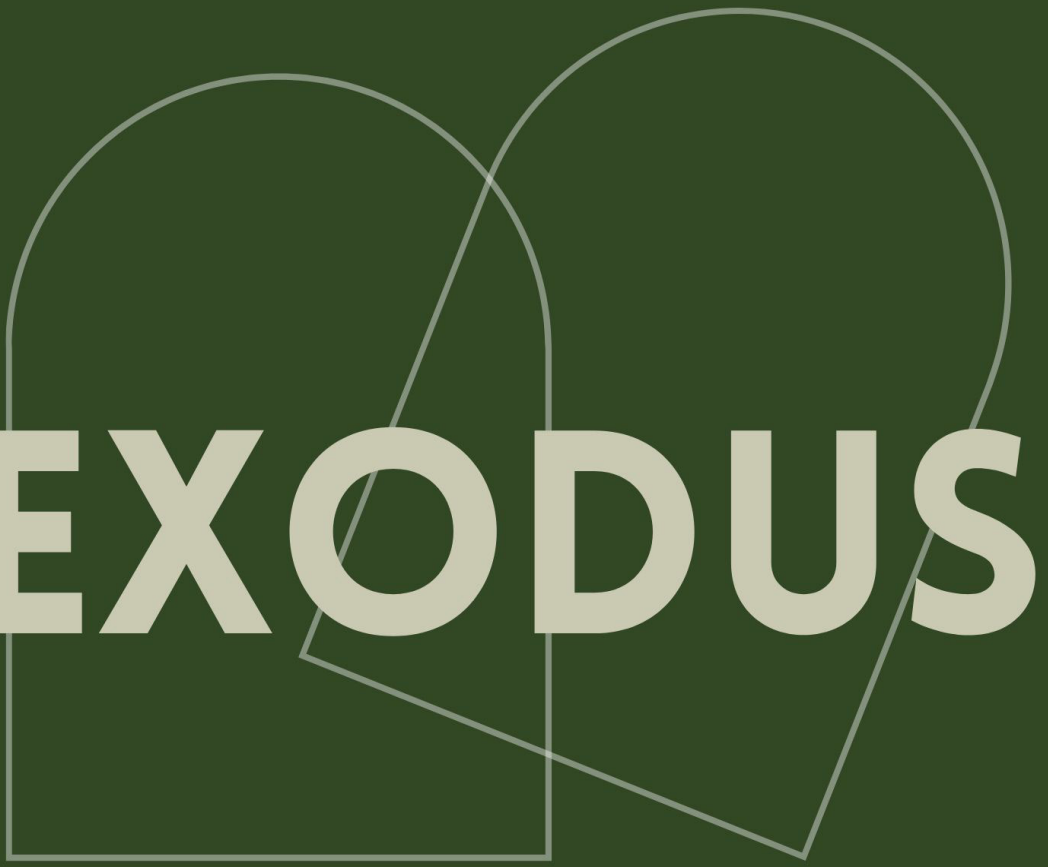
LIFE GROUP
Leader Guide



EXODUS

NAME _____

wentzville CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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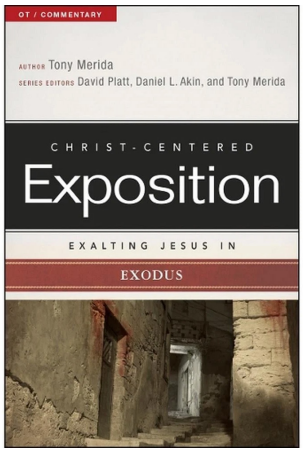
COMMENTARY FOR THIS EXODUS STUDY



LETTER FROM KEITH

Dear WCC Family,

As we continue our journey of putting God First, we are excited to walk together through the book of Exodus in our upcoming sermon series, “No Other gods.”

The story of Exodus is much more than the account of Moses, the plagues, and the parting of the Red Sea. It is the story of a God who rescues His people, reveals who He is, and calls His people to belong to Him completely. One study gave me these three theological themes: revelation, redemption, and relationship!

At the heart of Exodus is a simple but powerful truth: There is no one like our God, and there should be no one or nothing above Him in our lives. We live in a world filled with competing priorities, voices, desires, and distractions. While we may not bow down to statues as the Israelites did, we can still allow other things to take God’s rightful place in our hearts. Our careers, finances, relationships, comfort, success, reputation, possessions, hobbies, or even our own plans can become the things we trust, pursue, and prioritize above God.

As you work through this discussion guide with your Life Group, don’t simply ask, “What does this passage teach us about Moses or Israel?” Ask the deeper question: “What does this passage reveal about God, and what does it mean for me to put Him First?”

Our prayer is that your Life Group will become a place where you can have honest conversations, wrestle with challenging questions, encourage one another, and discover practical ways to live God First. Life Groups aren’t just about having another Bible study. They are about doing life together. Take time to pray for one another. Celebrate what God is doing. Encourage someone who is struggling. Ask the hard questions. Be willing to share what God is showing you.

As we journey through Exodus, may we be reminded again and again that our God is worthy of our complete trust, obedience, worship, and devotion. Our God is worthy to be First in our lives. Thank you for being part of a Life Group and for helping us become a church that continues to ignite a passion for Jesus, the Bible, the Church, and Others.

Blessings,
Keith Comp
Senior Minister

WEEK 1 | THE DILEMMA [GENESIS 50, EXODUS 1]

START TALKING (OPENING QUESTIONS)

1. **Share with the group a favorite day you had this summer. What made that day special?**

2. **This year, the theme for WCC is "God-First". Why is it important for Christians to live "God-First" in a messy, broken world?**

START THINKING (DIGGING INTO THE TEXT)

READ: The story begins with the Israelites (God's People) residing in Egypt.
Setting the scene: the end of Genesis tells the story of how Joseph found favor with Pharaoh and ended up in Egypt with his brothers. Time has passed, Israel has grown, and now God's people find themselves enslaved by the Egyptians.

1. **Read Exodus 1:8-16. What are some examples of injustice that you see being committed against the Israelites?**
   a. The Israelites were experiencing discrimination (v. 8, 10), slavery (vs. 11-14), and genocide (vs. 15-16). All forms of these unjust acts were motivated by the sin of Pharaoh and the Egyptian people.

2. **Read Psalm 99:4, Psalm 103:6, and Psalm 146:7-9. What do we learn about God's heart within these verses and how does it stand different compared to Pharaoh?**

3. **To live "God-First", our heart must break for the things that break the Lord's heart. Read Isaiah 1:16-17. What is this verse calling us to do and how does it mirror the heart of God?**
   a. Commentary from Commentaries: I believe the impulse that drives people to go to unreached peoples to share the gospel is the same impulse that calls them to care for victims of injustice: love. Justice is love going public. -Tony Merida

4. **In the midst of injustice, the book of Exodus introduces us to two women who beautifully lived out Isaiah 1:17. Read Exodus 1:15-22. What sticks out to you from this story of brave disobedience?**
    a. While these women did fear Pharaoh, they feared God even more! It was out of their desire to live "God-First" that they stood against injustice and rescued the lives of innocent Hebrew baby boys. God rewarded the midwives' bold courage by giving them families of their own while blessing and growing the nation of Israel.

START SHARING (APPLYING THE TEXT)

1. **Does addressing injustice and standing up for what's right feel out of your comfort zone? Why or why not?**

2. **How can Christians today respectfully disagree with a sinful world without losing their influence?**

3. **What examples of injustice do you see in your community today?**

START DOING (LIVING OUT THE TEXT)

1. **What can you practically do as a life group to live out Isaiah 1:17 and address the injustices within your community? How can you point those impacted to Jesus? Brainstorm ideas together.**

START PRAYING (PRAYING IN LIGHT OF THE TEXT)

1. **Listed below are stats provided by the International Justice Mission about injustice around the world. As a group, pray over these stats, asking God to raise up believers who can stand against injustice.**
    a. $236 billion is generated in annual global profits from forced labor and sexual exploitation. That's more annual profit than the NFL, NBA, MLB, and the NHL make combined.
    b. There are 750 million women and girls who endure physical and/or sexual violence annually.
    c. There are over 50 million people who are currently held in slavery through threat of violence.
    d. Human trafficking is the second largest and fastest-growing criminal industry globally.

WEEK 2 | MOSES–FROM BIRTH TO BURNING BUSH [EXODUS 2-4:17]

START TALKING

1. **If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? (For Example: Intelligence, Better Hair, Height)**

START THINKING

READ: As we talked about last week, the Israelites are oppressed and enslaved by Egypt. Exodus 2 tells the story of a brave family from the tribe of Levi who hid their son from Pharaoh. When their baby became too difficult to conceal, they placed their son in a basket and released him down the Nile River. Spotted by Pharaoh's daughter, this baby was picked up and given the name Moses. Today, we are going to discuss how God used Moses for his purposes and how God can use us today.

1. **Compare and contrast Exodus 2:11-14 and Exodus 2:15-22. What is similar about Moses in these stories and how is Moses different in these stories? What do we learn about his heart in both stories?**

2. **Read Exodus 2:23-3:10. What do we learn about God in these verses? How do these characteristics relate to what we talked about last week in session one?**
   a. God hears the cries of those experiencing injustice and He uses us as His hands and feet to bring healing and hope into the world!

3. **Divide your group into three and assign these verses out. As a subgroup, identify Moses's apprehension and what God says in response. After discussing, share what you found with the whole group.**
   a. Exodus 4:1-9
   b. Exodus 4:10-12
   c. Exodus 4:13-17

4. **The key text today is found in Exodus 3:11-15. What do you think God means when he says, "I AM WHO I AM," in response to Moses' fear?**
   a. In the time of Exodus, a name represents someone's identity and character. When Moses asks for God's name, the Lord's response can be translated as, "I am the one who simply is." God is eternal; he never changes, needs nothing, and keeps every promise. He is always present with His people (vs. 15).

b. Commentary from Commentaries: "God is independent, all-sufficient in himself, and the only source of all existence and life. Yhwh (LORD) is the name that describes this essence and identity most clearly. . . . His name is 'being.'" (Herman Bavinck)

START SHARING

1. **Share a time when God called you to something that you felt unqualified for. What were the fears you struggled with in the midst of that calling?**

2. **Imagine the Lord says to you in the midst of that tough calling, "I AM WHO I AM." How would your attitude change under a better understanding of God's character?**

3. **Is there something that God is calling you to right now? Share that calling with the group along with any fears you might have.**

START DOING

1. **This week, find time to hang out with someone who isn't Christian, or with someone whose faith journey you don't know. For example, grabbing breakfast with a coworker, inviting someone you met at the gym to coffee, inviting a family over from your child's sports team to dinner, etc. Make it your goal to learn their story.**

2. **A few weeks ago, Keith announced a continuation of the Bold Future campaign, which would allow our church to build a bigger worship center to meet the growth that we've experienced over the last five years. This upcoming Sunday (September 27th) and throughout the week, WCC is building a prayer walk experience with prompts and exercises to get you thinking about how God wants to use you. As a group, coordinate a date that works for everyone and attend the prayer walk experience together. For any questions, reach out to alex@wentzvillecc.org.**

START PRAYING

1. **As a group, pray for LOVEtheLOU. LOVEtheLOU is a community development initiative filled with staff and volunteers called by God to love the city of St. Louis. They connect resources to the needs of the city, striving to see St. Louis restored through transforming actions. Visit: lovethelou.org.**

Confused about Exodus 4:18-26?
We created this video to help you understand the passage! (scan QR code)

WEEK 3 | THE TEN PLAGUES [EXODUS 5-11]

START TALKING

1. **In what does our world tend to put confidence and trust other than God? (For example: Wealth, Politics, etc.)**

START THINKING

READ: Moses eventually submits to the Lord and travels to Egypt. What occurs over the next seven chapters is one of the most recognizable portions of the Bible: the ten plagues. Our theme this year, God-First, has often been preached as a choice we make as individuals. God-First is also a statement about the supremacy of the Lord compared to whatever "gods" our world may choose to worship. Today, we will be studying the ten plagues through the lens of the Egyptian "gods." As we do, one consistent theme will emerge: God is first over whatever culture chooses to worship.

1. **A study into the "gods" that Egypt worshipped reveals a deeper understanding of the ten plagues and the message God was communicating to the culture. Listed below are three descriptions of Egyptian "gods." Read the description along with the assigned text. How do the plagues connect to what Egypt worshipped and what do you think God was trying to communicate?**
   - **a.** Khnum was the "god" of the Nile River. Hapi was the "god" of annual flooding of the Nile and the "lord" of the fish. Read Exodus 7:14-25.
   - **b.** Heqet was an Egyptian "goddess" of fertility with the head of a frog. Read Exodus 8:1-15 and look for connections to fertility.
   - **c.** Geb was the Egyptian "god" of the Earth. Read Exodus 8:16-19 with a specific focus on where the gnats came from.
   - **d.** For a more detailed description of Egyptian gods and how they connect to the plagues, scan this QR code.

2. **Read Exodus 8:20-24. What was unique about this specific plague compared to the first three?**
   - **a.** This was the first plague that only impacted the Egyptians. If there was any confusion regarding where these plagues came from, the Israelites' protection confirmed God's hand in the plagues.

3. **Read Exodus 9:13-26. What do we learn about God's character in the midst of these plagues?**

4. **Read Exodus 11. Why do you think God chose this to be the final plague against Egypt? How does this final act of judgment connect back to Exodus chapter 1?**
   LEADER'S NOTE: Should people have a hard time with their answers, it's good to remind them that God had to do these kinds of things to eradicate evil from the world and prepare the way for Jesus.

5. **Read Exodus 12:37-38. What does the phrase "many other people" (NIV) communicate about the result of the plagues?**
   a. Not only did the Israelites leave Pharaoh, some Egyptians also walked away from the "gods" of their culture.

START SHARING

1. **How has your view of God changed in our revisit of the ten plagues?**

2. **Earlier, we shared areas that our world tends to put confidence and trust in other than God (money, politics, etc.). What does it look like for our culture to worship these things?**

3. **Are there "gods" you've been worshipping that you need to repent of today? Share those with the group.**

START DOING

1. **One of the biggest "gods" in our culture today is finances. Sunday, October 4th is our Commitment Sunday for our Bold Future capital campaign. We'd love for you to pray over the opportunity, asking God if and how He wants you to participate.**

START PRAYING

1. **Please be praying for Jireh India Missions. The nation of India has 33 different categories of gods that are worshipped in Hinduism. Jireh shines a light, sharing the good news of Jesus. They provide homes and education for orphans at House of Peace, teach widows to sew, provide bread for much of their community through Five Loaves Bakery, provide relief work among leper colonies, and provide food and school items for families through the ROCK program. They strive to fulfill Psalm 82:3 — Defend the poor and orphans; do justice to the afflicted and needy.**

WEEK 4 | THE PASSOVER [EXODUS 12]

START TALKING

LEADER'S NOTE: Make sure you have communion elements for your group (bread and juice) ready for week four's session. Your group will conclude with taking communion at the end of this session.

1. **What is a tradition that your family celebrates every year? What is a tradition you celebrated every year as you grew up?**

START THINKING

READ: Today we will look at the final plague: Passover. This final plague, the death of Egypt's firstborn sons, points backward to the affliction Egypt brought upon the Israelite's infants. It also points forward to Christ. Today, we will unpack the meaning of different elements from Passover and then conclude by taking communion together as a group.

1. **Read Exodus 12:1-7. What details stick out to you as you read about the sacrificial lamb's place within the Passover?**

   READ: The Passover Lamb represents a theme that we see throughout Scripture of substitution. When facing the reality of death, a sacrifice can take your place, ensuring protection. The lamb's requirement of being without defect reflects a truth we need to understand about our Heavenly Father. God is worthy of our best and desires our best when sacrificing for Him.

2. **Read Exodus 12:8 and Numbers 9:9-11. If Passover was meant as an annual reminder of what the Israelites experienced in Egypt and were rescued from, why does God want them eating bitter herbs? What connection does this element have within the Exodus story?**
   - **a.** In Exodus 1:14 and Exodus 12:8, the same Hebrew root word is used to describe the bitter experience of the Israelite slaves and the bitter herbs in Passover.
   - **b.** Most modern observations of Passover use a mixture of Romaine lettuce, endives, and horseradish to represent their bitter herbs.

3. **Read Exodus 12:8, 12:17-20, and 12:39. As future generations of Israelites eat unleavened bread during Passover celebrations, what will they be reminded of within the Exodus story?**
   a. The command to eat unleavened bread is immensely practical. The Israelites didn't have time to sit around and wait for their bread with yeast to rise. Future generations of Jewish people eating unleavened bread would be reminded of the urgency at which the Israelites had to leave Egypt.

4. **As a group, make a list of ways that Jesus connects to the story of the Passover. Use these verses below for guidance.**
   a. John 1:29-30, Luke 22:7-22, 1 Corinthians 5:7

START SHARING

1. **The Israelites experienced the pains of slavery while living in Egypt. We experience the pains of spiritual slavery when we sin. How is sin like enslavement? What impact does it have upon us?**

2. **How have you experienced the pain and bitter nature of enslavement from your sin?**

3. **Jesus is our Passover lamb, whose blood's covering gives us a path toward freedom. How has that been true in your walk with Christ?**

START DOING & PRAYING

1. **As a group, partake in the communion elements. Take the bread and cup and conclude your group time by praying together, thanking Jesus for being your Passover lamb.**
2. **LINC (Love In the Name of Christ) - LINC's mission is to provide support and direction for disadvantaged families and individuals in the community, helping them to set goals and objectives that will empower them to become productive citizens within the community.**

WEEK 5 | OUT OF EGYPT [EXODUS 13-15]

START TALKING

1. **Every story has a climax! Share with the group one of your favorite climaxes in movies, television series, or books.**

START THINKING

READ: Today we reach the climax of the Israelites' departure from Egypt. After the Passover and the death of the Egyptian firstborn, Pharaoh lets Moses and his people go free. Today, we will study the thrilling climax as God rescues His children out of Egypt.

Photo Credit Linda Carlton

1. **Read Exodus 13:17-22. Keeping in mind that the destination for Moses and the Israelites is the Promised Land, how are the Israelites being tested within these verses? What comfort does God give them?**
   a. Instead of going east, God directed His people south. This would bring the Israelites further into Pharaoh's territory. What made the most sense was a direct line east across the coast, but God knew that the Israelites were not ready for war. He provided the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire to make it crystal clear which path to take.

2. **Read Exodus 14:1-4. If you were Moses and were given these instructions by God, how would you react?**
   a. Keeping in mind that they are traveling further into Egypt's territory, being told they are not ready for battle, and now have their backs against the wall, trapped by the Red Sea, this instruction by God would have required a tremendous amount of faith!

3. **Read Exodus 14:5-12. What sticks out to you from these passages? What sticks out from Pharaoh's response and the Israelites' response?**

4. **Read Exodus 14:13-31. How do you see the themes of trust and protection appear among these verses?**

START SHARING

1. **God's plan can sometimes send us in unexpected directions! Share with your group a moment when God's plan for you was something different than you expected.**

2. **When you were asked to go that different direction, did you respond in fear or faith? Be honest with your group and encourage one another amidst the honesty.**

3. **Ultimately, God delivered His people from something big and terrifying. The Israelites' understanding of the Lord changed after that rescue moment (14:31). Many of us have moments where we have been rescued by God. How did your perception of Him change throughout that rescue experience?**

START DOING

1. **Is there an area of your life right now where your back is against the wall; where you are in need of rescue? Share that area with your group and then once someone shares, have someone else in the group pray for them asking God to intervene.**

START PRAYING

1. **One area of trial for many Americans is access to affordable housing. Habitat for Humanity of St. Charles County believes that everyone deserves to have a safe and affordable place to live and raise a family. To that end, they build more than homes; they build communities and provide educational programs and support to ensure homeownership sustainability. WCC partners with Habitat to help build homes in our communities. When gathering prayer requests to end your group time, include Habitat for Humanity among your prayers.**

WEEK 6 | MUMBLING AND GRUMBLING [EXODUS 16–17]

START TALKING

1. **Did your parents ever talk about what you were like as an infant? What were you or your children like as babies?**

2. **Why is learning trust an essential part of the infancy years?**

START THINKING

READ: Now that the Israelites have crossed out of Egypt and into the wilderness, they find again that their faith and trust in God is being tested. As Peter Enns says in his Exodus commentary, "If Israel's departure from Egypt is her 'Birth,' she is now in her period of infancy, the beginning where God is taking His people by the hand and teaching them patiently and lovingly about who He is and what He has in store for them. These stories, therefore, are not just about the murmuring of God's people, but God's care for them."

1. **Today's study time will look a little different. Your job as a group is to read three stories in Exodus and identify these five elements listed below. The three stories are Exodus 15:22-27, Exodus 16, and Exodus 17:1-7. You can complete all three stories as a group or you can divide your group into three. If you divide, share your answers with everyone once the questions are completed.**
   - **a.** What was the struggle?
   - **b**. What was the Israelites' response to the struggle?
   - **c.** What was Moses' reaction to the Israelites?
   - **d.** How did God solve the problem/use Moses to solve the problem?
   - **e.** What do we learn about God from this trial?
   - **f.** How does this story relate to the topic of trust?

START SHARING

1. **What was your immediate reaction to these three stories? Did you find yourself judging or sympathizing with the Israelites?**

2. **Why is it important for God's people to learn to trust Him? What do you lose if the trust isn't there?**

3. **Think about the moments when you have struggled to trust God. What was contributing to that lack of trust?**

4. **What would be different about your life if your trust and dependence on God increased in this next year?**

START DOING

1. **This week, we want you to write down one way God provided for you each day: not just financially, but through relationships, encouragement, opportunities, strength, or answered prayers. We want to train your eyes to notice God's daily faithfulness every day; it will help you grow in trust and dependence!**

START PRAYING

1. **This week, pray for D & K, two of WCC's mission partners. D & K serve in a closed country, where they are leading others to Christ. It's dangerous for them to claim the name of Christ where they live and they have to trust God every day. Please be praying for them!**

Stay up to date on what's happening at WCC including events, new studies, gatherings, men's and women's ministry, NextGen ministry, playdates, and more! Be sure to check it out so you don't miss what's coming up! You can find it all at

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