

## **DISCUSSION:**

Discuss the question cluster below

(As much or as little as works for your group and in any order you like)

\*Feel free to break off into smaller groups if it helps you share more personally\*

We're continuing a sermon series called, "Exodus: Out of Darkness. Into Light." In it we'll focus on the story of God delivering his people out of the darkness of the soul-crushing oppression, enslavement and genocide they faced in Egypt and into the light of life with him. The hope is that through this story we will come to see the persistence of God's light, hope and faithfulness amidst the frequent darkness in our own lives and our world.

**I. This week, we looked at how God started to actually deliver his people out of their suffering. But that deliverance comes in some ways that challenge our modern sensibilities. Namely, in God's miraculous, severe judgments on Egypt and his hardening Pharaoh's heart to not let Israel go despite them. Perhaps more surprisingly, all these were aimed (Ex. 7:3-5; 9:15-16) at the world coming to know God in a real, powerful way. To make sense of how all this works and what it means for our lives we looked at: 1) the Shock of Pharaoh's Stubbornness; 2) the Surprise of God's Goal; and 3) The Freedom of God's Control. We saw that God harden's Pharaoh's heart in stubbornness not to show us *how* God's mind works, but show us HE is the one who works (whether we understand how/why he works or not). We also saw that God's surprising goal is not destroy oppressors like Egypt, but to actually change and redeem them. And we saw that God's control over Pharaoh reveals that our deliverance does not come about because the people and things that oppress us finally let us go, but because God takes away their power over us. Let's discuss how these things impact our lives.**

- A. What connected with you from the sermon or from the passage?
- B. Do you tend to prefer mercy *or* justice (rather than mercy *and* justice, like God shows he has a heart for in our passage)?
  1. *Do you tend to like mercy for you and justice for 'them'?*
  2. *Where might God be calling you to a life that reflects more of his mercy and his justice? In your family? Work? School? Friendships?*
- C. Where do you want an answer *from* or *about* God more than you want *him*?
  1. *How does it change your perspective on God to know that more than any answer or information he wants to give you relationship with him?*
- D. Where does it feel like your freedom and flourishing depends on someone or something other than God right now?
  1. *Where is God inviting you to hand that trial over to him and let him hold the power over it rather than having to try and find the power for relief yourself?*