



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Lent Sermon Series – What is God Like? Faithfulness

Speaker: Rich Villodas – Lead Pastor

Scriptures: Exodus 34:5-7

Exodus 34:5-7

⁵Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Pastor Rich will be closing our Lenten series through Exodus 34. We will explore the last word describing God's character—faithful.

Sermon Questions:

1. Pastor Rich shared that God's faithfulness means that God's character is reliable and that everything he says is true. Which of the five key adjectives that God uses to describe himself in Exodus 34:6 do you most need to be reminded is true and reliable? Why? (compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, loyal love, faithfulness)
2. Additionally, we were encouraged to see this faithfulness as stability and the anchor we need to hold us in an unstable world. Where do you most need stability in your life right now and where have you been looking to gain stability?
3. One way we can receive stability is by fixing our hearts on God's Word. To what degree are you opening yourself up to Scripture? When can you take time this week to let the truth of God's word secure and encourage you?
4. Please refer to our Lenten Study Guide for further questions and reflection.



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CHURCHWIDE LENTEN 2024 BIBLE STUDY

what is
GOD
like?

WEEKLY STUDY GUIDE



Session 6: Faithfulness | “EMET” | אֱמֶת

IMMERSE

After reading the introduction for this session, read Luke 19:28-44 before the group time. What stands out to you? What do you notice about Jesus?

INTRODUCTION

The word “emet” translated as “faithfulness” in Exodus 34:6 can be also translated as “truth.” It is related to a word we often hear at the end of prayers, “amen” which means verily, or truly. God tells the truth and upholds the truth.

The root word for both words means firm, fixed, or sure. In that vein, the faithfulness of God points to how he is firm, dependable, and worthy of being trusted. When God describes himself as emet or faithful, he is relaying the reliability and stability of his presence and being. As the psalmist declares about God’s work and instruction in Psalm 111:7 - “The works of his hands are faithful (emet) and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.” God’s faithfulness invites a relationship - he can be trusted.

The Hebrew word for trust he-emin is the verb form of *emet*. It can be translated as “to believe”, “have faith in”, or “consider one trustworthy.” Abraham, our forefather in trusting in God, experiences God’s faithfulness. Through circumstances that look bleak and impossible, God is true to his promises to Abraham and proves his trustworthiness again and again.

INTRODUCTION (cont.)

God’s steadiness and reliability are declared over and over again in Scripture in the ways that he is called a Rock. In blessing his son Joseph at the end of his life, Jacob prays, “But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel...” (Genesis 49:24) In Psalm 18, after being delivered from his enemies and the hand of Saul, David sings “For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the Rock except our God?”

In the gospel passage for this session, we see God’s loving, reliable, covenant-keeping faithfulness in Jesus in how he sets his face and enters Jerusalem, moving towards the reason he came into the world - to die on the cross for humanity.



Scripture Passage

LUKE 19:28-44 (NET)

Read Together

28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 30 "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'" 32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They replied, "The Lord needs it." 35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt, and put Jesus on it. 36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. 37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: 38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" 40 "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." 41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 42 and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. 43 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. 44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."



Session 6: Faithfulness (cont.)

OPENING QUESTION

When do you find it easy to keep your word? When is it more challenging?

INVESTIGATE

1. The true king, Jesus, the Son of God, enters Jerusalem, on a borrowed donkey. What differences might there be for the crowd watching - seeing Jesus enter the city in royal robes and on a magnificent horse versus seeing Jesus in his regular wear on a slow-moving donkey? Why do you think God chose a donkey and not a stallion?
2. Take a moment to imagine this scene with the disciples and crowd praising Jesus as the king who comes in the name of the Lord. What do you think this moment looked like? Sounded like? Felt like? Reflect on v. 40 - So often in Jesus' ministry, he silenced those who knew who he was or had experienced miraculous healing. In this moment, he allows praise and worship to be voiced. Why do you think that is?
3. Jesus enters Jerusalem with eyes wide open. He knows what is about to happen, how the chants of the crowd will change, and what is yet to happen to Jerusalem and its people. Take some time and reflect as a group on how Jesus rides in on a donkey, heads knowingly to a cross, and weeps over a city in the face of his impending painful death. What aspect of God's faithfulness stands out to you?

INTEGRATE

1. Jesus' life shows us the faithfulness of God over and over again with an ultimate picture of his trustworthiness in how he died for us. How have you experienced God's reliable, constant, dependable, faithfulness in your life?
2. What would you want to shout if you were there as Jesus entered, knowing him as you do?

INVITE

1. Our lives are not only triumphal entry days where we can vividly see God's provision and care or feel his presence. Where do you struggle to see or trust God's faithfulness?
2. Where would you like to grow in trusting God? What might be one step you can take to practice trust in God?

Take turns sharing in a sentence or two, starting with the prompt

"I'm beginning to realize _____."

CLOSING PRAYER

This is the last session of this Lent Study. Share something that you sense God is inviting you to hold onto from this study. Pray for each other in this area and any other additional prayer requests that are shared.