

As we emerge from lockdown...

Week 3: Receiving the grace of God

WELCOME

Spend time relaxing and sharing together.

Icebreaker. If you had to flee from your home quickly, and could only take three items with you, what would you take?

WORSHIP

Thank the Lord for the positive and life affirming things in our lives.

Each think of three things we would like to change in society and then share them with the group. Lift them up in prayer.

WORD

Moses, with the help of his brother Aaron, confronts Pharaoh on God's behalf: "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'" (Exodus 5:1). Pharaoh refuses, and so God sends ten plagues upon the Egyptians (Exodus 7-11). When the last plague kills Pharaoh's son, he finally allows Israel to leave (Exodus 12.31).

Read Exodus 12.1-14

1. A strange aspect of the event is the smearing of blood of the sacrificial lambs on the doorframes to mark the houses where the Israelites live so that they would be protected when the Lord passes over to strike down the first born (Exodus 12.23). Why does Yahweh, the omniscient (all-knowing) god need to do this?

Growth Group Notes

Spring 2021



2. Moses told the people that they should commemorate the day that the Lord brought the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt (Ex 12.14,17). What was the point of this (Ex 13.14)? In what ways do we utilise Christian festivals today as individuals and as the church?

Read Exodus 12.31-42

3. Verse 38 says "Many other people went up with [the Israelites], and also large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds." Who do you think these people were and why did they go with them?

4. What can we do to glorify God and make a positive impression on our families, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, etc.?

Read Acts 6.1-7

5. Can you detect any signs of racism in the account from the early church?

6. How did they resolve the problem?

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WHAT NEXT?

Dave Hermitt spoke about racism on Sunday (2nd May):

- Jews as victims of racism
- Racism in the church today
- Emerging from Lockdown being more like the church that God intends.

The Church of England's report: 'From Lament To Action'

(www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf) states:

"Addressing systemic and institutional racism and racial sin in the church is not a theological addendum. It is a missional imperative of the Church of England as set out in the Anglican Communion's fourth mark of mission, 'to transform unjust structures of society': to restore the equal dignity of each person as holding the image of God. The Christian narrative of reconciliation offers us an invitation to confess the sin of racism, and to acknowledge our past and present complicity in various forms of ethnic discrimination and racial prejudice, so that we may truthfully and honestly work together to build the kingdom of God here and now."

What can we do?

How do we play our part in eradicating racism from the church and society? As we emerge from lockdown we need speak up for and stand alongside those who are racially abused, persecuted or disadvantaged because of other injustices in society.

Discuss and pray about what we might do as individuals and the church.