

Week 3: Hometown Hero (Redemption)- Exodus 3

Series Recap and Intro:

- For the past two weeks, we've studied the Bible in the first two parts, Creation and Fall. We are asking: What is God's story and where do we fit into it?
- We read about how God built a home for his people to dwell with Him. He wanted **His people in His place enjoying His presence**. We also read about how Adam and Eve's decision to sin separated humanity from God's presence and left all humanity **homesick**.

Now we will look at how God can redeem us through our circumstances. We will dive into Exodus chapter three.

Transition:

- Has someone ever broken a promise to you? How did their fickleness make you feel? Did it impact your ability to trust others? [\[Leader note: Consider letting students share briefly and then briefly share one of your own stories.\]](#)
- We expect people to keep promises, but many times they fail us—unintentionally or not. People can betray or disappoint us, which can make it tough to trust others. This makes it difficult to trust God since he holds our entire lives in his hands. Fortunately for us, we serve a God who never changes and cannot lie. His promises are true.

Our **Big Idea** today is: **God's presence redeems us and uses us to redeem others.**

Bible Passages

Read Exodus 3:1-6.

- God did not need to be introduced to Moses; he knew Moses already. God also knows us, even if we are not aware of him. He is not far away. Not only is God faithful, but he is also a personal God—present and knowable. Sometimes we wait around for God to move in our lives, wanting some special or unmissable sign, but Moses' experience with God at the burning bush shows us that...

(1.) **God's presence is what makes a situation special.**

- This is the first time Moses experienced, heard from, or met God. And the first thing he heard was his own name. God was personally acquainted with Moses before he ever had a chance to choose God.

Illustration: Moses was on his normal routine when God appeared to him. God sometimes makes himself known in our everyday routines like he did for Moses. We should pay attention to God's presence, but we may be too busy to notice him. (Leader Note: Share your own example of how God can make himself known in the everyday, or how you might have missed something by being too busy. *On a Saturday not too long ago, I clearly heard God say to me to SIT. So I sat at my kitchen table and did not do the two tasks I wanted to do that morning. Instead I sat down in God's presence.*)

Application: What captivates your attention? What could you do to reduce distractions so that you can focus on God? (Leaders you can share your own example. *I have put quiet mode on my Instagram page from 9pm to 9am. I have also put night mode on Facebook from 9pm to 10am. This helps me to not be on social media late at night. Instead, I pray to God about whatever is on my heart at that time.*)

Read Exodus 3:7–10

(2.) God hears us and His presence is with us in our circumstances.

→ At the burning bush, God told Moses to lead the Israelites out of captivity. God has heard the cries of his people. He shared with Moses that he had plans to lead them into the land he promised their ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey. This is in keeping with his plan all along: **God's people in God's place enjoying God's presence.**

Illustration: Not only is God faithful, but he is also a personal God—present and knowable. He wants a relationship with his people and is available when we cry out to Him. How has God shown himself as a personal and relatable God in your life? (Leader note: Share your own example. *I know for me, at every end of the summer season, I usually have anxiety dreams of the first day of school. However this year, I did not have any anxiety dreams at all and I know that it is God's presence over my life and He has given me peace about the upcoming school year.*)

Application: Do you ever feel like your prayers are ignored or unheard? What hope could this passage give you as you wait for God's plan? (Leader note: You can share your own example. *There was a period in my life when I was physically unable to stand on my own for too long and could not lift anything with my left arm. Looking back to that season, despite my physical limitations, God heard my prayers and in His timing, He healed me. I often thought God was not hearing my prayers during that time of my life. But, I know that God was with me and is always with me in any season.*)

Read Exodus 3:11–15

(3.) God's presence with us is far more powerful than our strengths or insecurities.

→ Moses questioned whether he was good enough to serve God. He brought up a list of his insecurities—reasons he thought disqualified him from doing what God asked. Like Moses, our insecurities can hold us back from our God-given potential and even give us a reason to not serve him at all. Instead of giving Moses a list of qualities that make him ideal for leading Israel, God reassured Moses of God's presence.

Illustration: God is able to handle our insecurity and inability and turn what seems to be a barrier into a blessing. God's presence with Moses was far more important than Moses having it all together.

(Leaders you can share your own example. For me, I thought I was not a helpful leader for the youth group because I do not have my license or have a car. God has shown me that that is not the only thing I need to be a leader among teenagers. God has released the shame of that and turned it around so that I can conquer my shame.)

Application: Where do you turn when you are feeling insecure or fearful? What can you do to remind yourself of God's presence during times of struggle?

(Leaders you can share your own example. For me I turn to food, I emotionally eat, because I am stressed about something in my life. I know I can ask myself if I am really hungry and also ask myself what I am feeling and journal it out. I will also pray to God through my journaling.)

Reflections:

God revealed himself as "I AM." This name reflects who God is—an ever-present, all-knowing God. When God called himself "I AM," he revealed his existence, self-sufficiency, and active, ever-present nature. No matter what is going on in the world, **God is present and active.**

In Exodus 3:15, God used his name for the first time—Yahweh. God began with the meaning and promise of who he is ("I AM") then formalized it into a name to identify himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God is the same God today that he was for our ancestors. When God says he always was, is, and will be present and active in the world, he shows us how much authority he has over his creation.

God's names are not just the ways we identify him, they are insights into who he is, promises of what he will do, and assurance of his presence. They comfort us in our pain, strengthen us when we are weak, and calm us in our distress.

God uses Moses to free the Israelites from Egypt, even though Moses was doubtful and afraid. Even when we're insecure, the proper way to respond to God's faithfulness is full, uncompromising obedience. God's deliverance of Israel was a foreshadowing of our deliverance from the power of sin. We can feel hopeful that God can deliver us from any unexpected or unforeseen circumstances.

The **Big Idea**: **God's presence redeems us and uses us to redeem others.**

Not only would God be with Moses, but he would do the work of saving the Israelites. God had everything planned out and under control, claiming victory from the very beginning. But Moses was afraid because he felt God's plan relied on his personal gifts and resources. God did not need Moses's gifts and wasn't hindered by his flaws. God does not always call the most qualified people, but he always equips those he calls. Deliverance is a process. God provides for us, but we have to trust while we walk through our circumstances.

This week, think about God's past faithfulness to you. If he has been faithful in the past, he can be trusted today. No matter what situation you are in, you can rest in his plan for your life. Reflect on what you learned about God's presence and thank him for making himself known to you in a miraculous way.

[Leader note: you can add this section anywhere you see fit in the message and word it how you'd like.] Each week of this series, we're exploring more of the Big Picture of God's story and how he is calling us home. It's like we're putting together a big puzzle. The little pieces by themselves might not make much sense, but as you put the pieces together, the big picture starts to become clear. So each week we're going to add some pieces to our puzzle to see what God has in store for us. Here's how we left our puzzle last week. [Show first image below]. Let's add a couple pieces from week 3! [Show image two below]

Image #1



Image #2



Questions:

1. In what situations can it feel like God is not present?

2. What can you do to remind yourself of God's presence during times of struggle?
3. What would it look like to trust God in faithfulness, even when you feel inadequate to serve him?
4. How might your insecurities be keeping you from the work he has prepared for you?
5. How does knowing that God is always active and present help you endure the struggles in your life?