

## No Water!

Exodus 17:1-7

September 4, 2011

Immediately after the people end their praise and worship of God, they encounter \_\_\_\_\_. No sooner have they finished their song than they start to \_\_\_\_\_.

Wilderness:

The problem here:

The reaction of the people: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

A question for us today: Am I a \_\_\_\_\_?

2 root causes of complaints:

1.

2.

Despite their complaining, manipulation, and testing, God \_\_\_\_\_.

Again and again:

1. Things you are holding onto & complaining about that you need to let go.

2. God's saving actions for you that you have forgotten in the midst of your complaints.

## Prayer Concerns:

**Monday:** Read Exodus 15:20-27

The Israelites respond to God's mighty action of deliverance at the Red Sea by breaking out into dancing and songs of praise. They have been the recipients of overwhelming grace from God! But this spiritual high doesn't last long. Immediately, they encounter problems with the reality of life in the wilderness.

\*How do the Israelites respond to the problem? What would have been a better and more faithful response?

\*Have you ever had an amazing, powerful experience with God, only to be confronted by hardship the next day? How did you respond? What would a more faithful response look like?

**Tuesday:** Read Exodus 16

The next problem the people encounter is hunger: there is no food in the wilderness. Once again, they complain. Once again, they long for Egypt. Once again, God provides and takes care of them.

\*What are the specific guidelines that God gives for collecting the food? What happens if they do not follow these guidelines?

\*The emphasis here is that each person has enough, no more and no less. Do you believe that there is "enough" in the world today? Why is it that some persons have more than they need while others do not have enough to live? Where do you fall in this spectrum? How might you learn to depend on God and be satisfied with enough?

**Wednesday:** Read Jeremiah 2:1-13

After the people made it to the promised land and built a kingdom, they had a difficult time following God's instructions. Once they were secure and settled, they turned away from God and went in their own direction. Jeremiah was a prophet who called the people to turn back to God.

\*How does God remember and characterize the 40 years that Israel spent in the wilderness. (v. 2) What have the people done to turn away from God?

\*In what or whom do you put your trust? Have you ever found that you put your hope in someone or something, only to be disappointed and hurt? (v.13) What might happen if you trusted God?

**Thursday:** Read Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist is a colorful character who prepares the way for Jesus' ministry. He calls people to repent, or change their mind from following their own way to following God's way. He does not get along well with the Pharisees and Sadducees, the official religious leaders of the day.

\*Why do you think that John did his work in the wilderness instead of in towns or cities? Why was he so upset with the Pharisees and Sadducees?

\*What do you need to repent of? How is God calling you to change so that you are following Jesus rather than your own will/mind/heart?

**Friday:** Read Matthew 4:1-11

Immediately after Jesus is baptized but before he begins his public ministry, he is led into the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights and tempted. The wilderness is a place of testing and trial, even for Jesus.

\*Why do you think the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness for this? Why would these things be tempting? How did Jesus resist the temptation?

\*Do you ever feel like you are in the wilderness being tempted when you are weakest? How have you been able to resist temptation and be faithful to God? How might Jesus' story give you guidance or tools for resisting?

**Saturday:** Read Colossians 3:12-17

In this letter to one of the earliest churches, Paul gives instructions to the believers about living a new life in Christ. This is what it looks like to be a disciple and follow Jesus.

\*What are listed as characteristics of a believer? (i.e. forgives others, thankful)

\*Which of these characteristics are evident in you? Can you give any concrete examples of how these fruits are seen in your life?

\*What characteristics are missing in your life? How might you develop these?

Central United Methodist Church  
428 S. College Ave.  
Salem, VA 24153  
540.389.2933  
[www.central-umc.org](http://www.central-umc.org)