



SERIES: NEW BEGINNINGS

Subseries: Yahweh Dwells

Lesson: Prone to Wander

Opening:

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

“O to grace how great a debtor daily I’m constrained to be! Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love; here’s my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.”

Drifting ----- Distrusting -----Defying -----
Defiling

Spiritual wandering almost never starts with open rebellion. It starts quietly with drifting. Drift leads to distrust. Distrust leads to defiance. And defiance eventually leads to defilement (profaning what is sacred)

Big Idea: We Are Prone to Wander

Read: Exodus 32:1-6

I. The Temptation to Wander

Table Talk Question: What are some of the activating events that tempted the Israelites to spiritual wander away from Yahweh in Exodus 32:1-6? _____

II. The Results of Wandering

- 1) **Idolatry** – looking to other sinful things instead of Yahweh to help them cope with their stressful and anxiety-inducing circumstances.
- 2) **Sexual indulgence** – unbridled sexual expression offered a momentary escape / relief from their circumstances.
- 3) **Distorted worship** – they ignore God’s revealed words and begin to determine for themselves how they want to relate to and worship God.

- 4) **Hostility towards spiritual accountability and authority** – they don't go to Aaron for prayer, counsel, or spiritual encouragement. They form a mob around him and tell him, "Lead us how we want to be led or ELSE." They form an echo chamber and only want to listen to spiritual leaders who will give approval to what they are doing.

Read: Exodus 32:7-25

III. The Severity of Wandering

IV. The Cost of Wandering

V. The Hope for Wanderers

Final Applications:

- 1) We Don't Drift in Good Directions
- 2) Reject Build-A-Bear Christianity (we don't get to worship a god of our own choosing)
- 3) Mountaintops inspire us, but valleys form us
- 4) God Relentlessly Pursues Wanderers

Life Group Questions:

- 1) Remember to open your life group with a time to “preach” to each other.
- 2) What aspect of tonight’s lesson was new, challenging, confusing, or convicting to you?
- 3) Recognizing Spiritual Drift – In the message, spiritual wandering was described as a progression: drifting → distrusting → defying → defiling.
 - Where do you most often see this progression show up in real life (either in yourself or others)?
 - Which stage do you think is easiest to ignore or justify?
- 4) Identifying Triggers – The Israelites were tempted to wander through delay, distance, dissonance, and dread.
 - Which of these do you personally find most challenging? Why?
 - How do those moments tend to affect your trust in God?
- 5) False Ways of Coping – Israel turned to idolatry and distorted worship to cope with anxiety and uncertainty.
 - What are some modern “idols” or coping mechanisms people turn to instead of God?
 - How can we tell when something good has become something we’re relying on more than God?
- 6) Minimizing Sin – Aaron deflected blame, and the people redefined their actions as “worship.”
 - Which is more tempting for you: blaming, renaming, or rationalizing sin?
 - Why is minimizing sin so spiritually dangerous?
- 7) Returning from Wandering – The lesson emphasized that God pursues wanderers and invites repentance.
 - If someone realizes they’ve drifted far from God, what are practical first steps to return?
 - How can this group help create an environment where people can come back honestly without hiding or shame?