



PARENT CONNECT

A BRIDGE BETWEEN PARENTS AND YOUTH MINISTRY

APRIL 2015



MOVIE NIGHT - APRIL 17

To celebrate the end of our study and to see how Hollywood interpreted the book, we are going to have a movie night and watch Exodus: Gods and Kings. We can enjoy it as entertainment and the amazing cinematography of the plagues, yet also consider ways that it was and wasn't faithful to the text. Most importantly though, we are going to have fun and enjoy each other's company!

We will meet in two groups:

Guys will meet at the Callaghan's place, 76 Elm St, and girls will watch at our place, 31 Lake Street. Start time is 7pm. Bring your favorite snack to share!

EXPERIENCING FREEDOM

We often remember Exodus for the plagues, the parting of the Red Sea and the Ten Commandments, but throughout our youth study of Exodus 1-15 we have seen the central theme of God revealing his name and character. Over and over we read that he sees the plight of his people, hears our cries, has compassion, remembers his promises and acts to redeem us. Two other themes are also repeated throughout the first part of the book:

One: God acts in judgment against those who deny him, but it is not a vindictive judgment. It is "that they may know that I am the Lord." God is always acting that he may be known, so that people may turn back to him from worshipping false gods (repent) and find true life.

Two: God demands Pharaoh to let his people go "that they may worship me." It is not a freedom to go and do whatever we want, but a freedom to worship him as God, to live life as his sons and daughters, growing in his likeness through the work of the Holy Spirit so that all the nations may

also come to know him and find true life.

It is in understanding these two things that we can truly experience freedom. In the bible, freedom always comes through serving the right master. Every single one of us is serving and worshipping something, so the question is, who or what do we worship and does that thing really have the power to offer us eternal life? To ask that another way, what is our ultimate source of identity, hope or security? In Egypt it was the gods of the river, frogs, the sun, and Pharaoh himself (each of the 10 things that were judged in the plagues). For us it may more likely be our appearance, career, grades, popularity, or wealth. But as we learn in Exodus, true life and true freedom are found only in turning from false gods (repenting) to worship the true and living God.



By Chris Dodds



FAMILY TIME

A WORD FROM THE WORD

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:26



EASTER - THE NEW EXODUS

On the night of Passover, before God freed his people from slavery, he told his people to sacrifice a lamb and to cover their doorways with its blood. Any household that did this would be passed over when judgment came. In this way, being saved from judgment required faith in the word of God and the blood of a slain lamb. People were commanded to join together every year for a Passover meal to remember how God acted to save them and to tell the story over and over amongst the generations.

As we prepare for Easter we remember the new Exodus, when God acted to secure us freedom from our ultimate enemy, sin and death. This time however, he took the judgment upon himself and provided his only Son, Jesus, as the sacrificial lamb who would take away the sins of the world.

Freedom and forgiveness is once again found not in our own works but upon our faith in the blood of the Lamb - Jesus.

Like the Hebrew people who gathered together at the Passover meal to recount the story of God freeing them, we are also called to tell the story to the generations of how God, through Jesus' death and resurrection, brought us freedom from sin and death.

Easter is a great time to do this as a family. Celebrate and share stories to pass on this good news to the next generations. Below are a few suggestions for how, but I'm sure you can come up with plenty more.

Telling The Story

Before dinner each night, read the passion narrative together from a different gospel.

Meditate on the stations of the cross together. Here is one written especially for teens.

Share with your children your own testimony. When did you come to faith in Jesus Christ and how did God reveal himself to you?

Attend a Good Friday service together. This service focuses on Jesus' death on the cross and allows us time to reflect on the obedience of Jesus, even though it required the ultimate suffering and sacrifice.

Attend the Easter Sunday service together and celebrate Jesus' conquering of death and the bringing of new life through his resurrection. Discuss: How does news of Jesus' resurrection change the way you live as a family?



IN THEIR WORLD

HELP FOR CYBERBULLYING

Because parents hurt when our kids hurt, bullying can be excruciating for families. And though the realm of social media isn't foreign to most moms and dads, it's not something most of us experienced as teens.

If your teen is being bullied, harassed, or stalked online, turn to these websites for helpful advice:

connectsafely.org

safeteens.com

cyberbullying.us

stopbullying.gov



UNFRIENDED

This movie, scheduled for April 17 release, takes horror flicks to cyberspace. Told entirely from a teenage girl's desktop, *Unfriended* follows the story of six friends being stalked from beyond the grave. The "culprit" is a girl who committed suicide after an unflattering video made its way to the Internet.

Horror movies rarely have redeeming value, and most parents probably discourage kids from watching them. But even seeing the trailers can provide great opportunities to talk to kids about the nature of cyberspace.

Open dialogue.

- Remember, what's posted on the Internet lives forever—even when you think it doesn't.
- Posting about other people, even when it's just a joke, can be devastating to the person who's the punchline.
- Being bullied or harassed online is serious. Tell someone.
- Is there anything online about you that I should know about?

Take the conversation to a spiritual level.

- *Luke 6:31* (NCV) says, "Do to others what you would want them to do to you." How can you live that out at school?
- *Matthew 5:9* (NIV) says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." When someone is being bullied, how can we bring peace?
- *Job 16:5* (NIV) says, "But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief." In context, Job is talking honestly about what little comfort words can offer when life is a disaster. What are some tangible ways to bring comfort to someone who's hurting?

Offer support.

- Have you ever been cyberstalked? Let's report it together.
- Have you ever felt suicidal because of a bully? Let's ask for help.
- Do you know someone who's being bullied? Let's talk to school officials.

