

2. As the Israelites waited for Moses to come down from the mountain they became impatient and made a golden idol. Where do you feel a sense of impatience with God today? What false gods/idols are worshipped in our society today in place of God? Why do we exchange false gods for the one true God?

3. God showed His love for His people and His desire to connect the Upper and Lower Story by settling in amongst them in the Tabernacle. God is still seeking to connect with us on a deeply personal level and in Christ has given us His Holy Spirit. What are ways you experience the presence and care of God breaking into your daily life?

4. God promised that His presence would be with the people and they would stand out in the world because of it. What are some ways Christians *should* stand out in our world? Name one area of your life in which you sense God is calling you to look different to the world because He is with you.

Prayer TimeGroup time - 15 minutes

Ask God to give you a clearer vision of who He is. Pray that it will not be tainted by false understandings and childish images, but shaped and informed by His Word. Welcome God, in growing measure, into your heart, family, church and workplace. Thank Jesus for being the ultimate, complete and final sacrifice for sin. Thank Him that you are made clean through His shed blood on the cross.

Finish your prayer time by praying for the needs of those in your *Growth Group*. Take a few minutes to share prayer requests. Look back to some of your prayer requests from prior weeks. How has God answered some of these prayers? Which requests are still awaiting His answer?

THE STORY

Commands and Covenant

Commands

Exodus 19-20; 32

- God insisted His people must live by a set of GUIDELINES.

- These commandments set the BOUNDARIES for the kind of community God desires for His special nation.

- God insists that people live by guidelines, and that SIN will be punished.

Tabernacle

Exodus 40

- God sought a HOME among His people – a visible reminder of His Holy presence.

- God required a way to restore FELLOWSHIP between a Holy God and a sinful people.

Covenant

Exodus 34

- The Lord makes a COVENANT that is to be written on our hearts.

- God has a grand plan to REDEEM each of us.

GROWTH GROUP HOMEWORK

Week of October 14-20, 2013

Getting Started.....Group time - 15 minutes

1. What was the worst discipline you received growing up? What had you done to deserve it? How did that discipline impact your choice to do that thing again?
2. In these first five weeks of *The Story*, what common themes have you observed as we look at God's *Upper* and *Lower Story*? How have these themes contributed to your understanding of who God is and how we relate to Him?

FOR GROWTH GROUP TIME

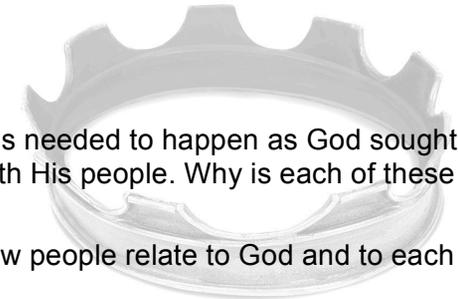
Getting Into God's WordGroup time - 35 minutes

Read *The Story*, Chapter 5 (In preparation to answer questions)

1. Read Exodus 20:1-17. What is the purpose of the Ten Commandments? How do they serve as boundaries for the kind of community God desires for His people? What do the Ten Commandments reveal about the nature of God and His desire to have a relationship with us?
2. Read Exodus 20:18-21. Moses said, "*Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.*" How does the fear of God restrain sin? How does the knowledge that all sin will be punished restrain sin?

3. The incident of the Golden Calf in Exodus 32 was in stark contrast to Israel's previous commitment, "*everything the Lord has said we will do.*" What commands did the people break? Why did the Israelites break God's commands? What was God's response to their sin?

4. Read Exodus 34:5-7. God describes Himself as "compassionate", "slow to anger", "gracious" and "abounding in loving-kindness." Where do you see these qualities in this chapter of *The Story*? Later, in Exodus 34:13-15, God describes Himself as a jealous God. What does this tell us about God? Why is it okay for God to be jealous?



5. In Exodus three things needed to happen as God sought to come down and connect with His people. Why is each of these so important?
 - Rules to guide how people relate to God and to each other.
 - A place for God to be visible and present amongst His people.
 - Sin to be punished or atoned for through sacrifice.

Applying It In My LifeGroup time - 25 minutes

1. The Ten Commandments are the basic "boundaries" for how we are to relate to God and each other. How would our lives and faith change if we followed these commands in spirit and in action? What can you do in your life to follow these commands more fully? What impact would this have on the relationships in your life?