



Hard Conversations with God

Can we trust you?

Hard Conversations:

- The common denominator is pain.
- Hard conversations can be constructive or destructive.
- Let's learn from Israel. They were in bondage in Egypt, and they began a hard conversation with God. They cried out for deliverance.

Hard Conversations:

- Exodus 3:7f, “The Lord said, ‘I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk & honey.’”

Hard Conversations:

- God sent Moses to deliver (signs)
- Exodus 4:31, “He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed. And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.”
- They are off to a great start. So, Moses goes to talk with Pharaoh.

Hard Conversations:

- Pharaoh makes life more difficult – increasing their cruelty and bondage.
- Exodus 5:21, “May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.”
- But, God isn’t done yet. He promises deliverance, and tells about the coming plagues.

Hard Conversations:

- Exodus 6:9, “Moses reported this to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and harsh labor.”
- God sends the plagues. Pharaoh responds. The last plague. The Red Sea.

Hard Conversations:

- Exodus 14:11f, “They said to Moses, ‘Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, “Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians”? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!’”
- Moses responded, “Don’t be afraid.” Most grumbling is rooted in fear.

Hard Conversations:

- Fear degenerates hard conversations into destructive conversations. Fear can lead us to distrust God, and dishonor God, and even to disobey God.
- God wants to be in relationship with us. He wants us to have honest, passionate dialogue with him about our pain. But, hard conversations can become destructive if we're not careful. (marriage)

Hard Conversations:

- God delivers the Israelites miraculously from Pharaoh's army.
- Exodus 14:31, "And when the Israelites saw the great power the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant."
- The very next chapter they run into a water crisis. . . And the people grumble.

Hard Conversations:

- God heals their water, and encourages them to listen to his voice and do right. God is rooting for them; he wants them to make it.
- The next chapter – a food problem. . . And the people grumble. Exodus 16:3, “If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”

Hard Conversations:

- Exodus 17 – no water again.
- This is a divine opportunity to correct a former mistake, and choose to trust him this time. But, they grumble again. More degenerative, dishonoring rhetoric.
- God wants you to trust Him. He wants to dialogue with you through hardship. Will you trust Him?

Hard Conversations:

- Sadly this generation of Israelites never learns to trust God.
- Numbers 11:1-3 – they complain about hardships
- Numbers 11:4f – they want variety in their diet.
- Numbers 12 – Miriam & Aaron complain about Moses.

Hard Conversations:

- Numbers 13 – the 12 spies are sent into the Promised Land.
- “How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?” Moses pleads for the people of Israel, God forgives them. But, they never enter the Promised Land.