

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 78.1-4, 12-16 [Worship]

1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, 3 things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us. 4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

12 In the sight of their ancestors he worked marvels in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan. 13 He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap. 14 In the daytime he led them with a cloud, and all night long with a fiery light. 15 He split rocks open in the wilderness, and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. 16 He made streams come out of the rock, and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

Consider:

[Think & Pray...]



It is hard to overcome fear sufficiently to follow God's call in the first place; it is even harder to persevere with this call when the going gets tough. In Exodus, the Israelites began to waver almost immediately. They had just crossed the Red Sea, but began to wish that they had not left Egypt: "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 16:3). They doubted whether God was with them at all: "Is the Lord among us or not?" (Exodus 17:7). They quickly

became discouraged when things did not go as expected, and began to doubt God's presence.

Human nature does not change much. We so easily believe that immediate success will meet us when we follow God's call. Worldly success and godly success work on different principles and timescales. By worldly standards, Moses was a disastrous leader; he led the Israelites out of slavery only to wander around with them in the desert for 40 years. He died before he reached the promised land. Yet Moses is one of the great heroes of our faith. This surely tells us that godly success is judged by very different criteria than we might expect. It challenges us to revisit those things we consider to be a success or a failure and to ask on whose criteria they succeed or fail. —Paula Gooder

[Scripture]

Matthew 20.23-32

23 When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" 24 Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 26 But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." 27 So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. 28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. 30 The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."