



**Sermon: Out of Egypt**  
**Scripture: Matthew 2:13-26**  
**Date: March 12, 2023**

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**1. Sunday Summary:** When the gospel writers choose to tell us something out of the life of Jesus, it's for two reasons. One is it happened, but two is it's revealing. It reveals something about who Jesus really is and what he came to do and what his message and ministry was. So, what does this account or this incident in the life of Jesus Christ tell us about Jesus himself? It tells us three things: 1) He is the target of hatred – Jesus evokes hostility and hatred because a) the claims he makes about himself (and the ones Scripture makes about him). This is still true today. Jesus' claim that he is God, and therefore everyone ought to worship him, still evokes hatred. b) This leads to the second thing: there is something inside us that resents those claims, because we all want to rule our own Kingdoms just like Herod (first commandment stuff). 2) He is the conduit of grace – Jesus' family is from Judea, but they end up in Nazareth in Galilee, which in the thinking of most Israelites is the most backwater, undignified, and marginal place you can be in Israel. The point is God is always going to the most remote, unloved, cast-aside people and places. Why? Because this is the nature of his salvation. It's for the weak, and those that know they can't save themselves – the least, the last, and the lost – which means this is how we have to see ourselves and come to him, but it's also how and whom we serve. We can't see ourselves as better than anyone. Grace very naturally should lead us to humility. 3) Jesus is the pinnacle of the story, the climax of God's plan – Jesus came "Out of Egypt" as the new and better Israel. He fulfills all (righteousness, justice, love, grace, mercy) that Israel never could, and in so doing stands in our place so that he receives God's curse while we receive his blessing. We get salvation, he gets condemnation, which leads us to thankfully obeying as best we can God's will and Word.

**2. Connecting Questions: (Interactive, life sharing, thought & feeling type stuff)**

- In the past, how have you marked, or otherwise engaged in Lent? Share with the group.
  
- How do you feel when Christians or Christianity come(s) "under fire" in our culture because of Jesus' claims? What has been your reaction to the seeming intolerance of Jesus, Christians, or the Christian faith in our broader society? How should we react?

- Talk about people you know who have been examples of grace? What attributes do you see in them that make them so gracious. To your mind, what does it take to be able to not “look down your nose” at anyone, but to see everyone as Jesus would have?

### **3. Truth Questions: (What does the Bible say?)**

- Read John 1:14 together. What does it mean that Jesus “came from the Father full of grace and truth?” Share examples of where you see both of those attributes (grace and truth) on display in the stories of Jesus? Does Jesus ever show only grace? What about only truth?

### **4. Formation Questions: (Taking it further, How does the Truth change the way I live?)**

- Take a few moments together and think about what today's message (and particularly about Jesus being the conduit of grace) means concretely for how you interact with people in the different places you are. A) at work B) at church/after church c) in the community. Are there people you avoid, or don't want to get to know because they're much different than you? How might you befriend or start a relationship with someone who isn't your kind of person?
  
- Think together about what it means that Jesus claims always illicit hatred. Should we be surprised when people react strongly against Jesus or the Christian faith? What's an appropriate response to this?

