

# Teaching Script



Week 5 – 5/22/22

## BOTTOM LINE

**IN NEW TERRITORY, THE BEST WAY TO MOVE FORWARD IS TO  
REMEMBER WHERE YOU'VE BEEN.**

## INTRODUCTION

Let's start today with a question: If you could know one thing about the future, what would it be?

That's a difficult question to answer, because there are probably a million things we'd like to know about the future. Things like:

- Will I stay in this job until I retire?
- Will I end up having enough money when I retire?
- Or forget retirement, will I have enough money in six months?
- What will my health look like? Will I get sick? Will I get better? What about my family's health?
- What will my grandkids be like?
- Will we *finally* get flying cars?

The truth is that, even if it's subconsciously, questions about the future are always on our minds. Generally, when things are going well in life, our view of the future doesn't cause much stress or anxiety. But when things *aren't* going well, our thoughts about the future can be dominated by fear. The idea of new territory—the future—can seem unsettling.

## TENSION

As humans, we like to have as much certainty as possible. We like to feel like we've got everything figured out. We like a plan. We like a schedule. We generally don't like things that are unpredictable. We want to feel some semblance of control.

Personally, I still love the feeling of figuring out a math problem my fourth grader has brought to me for help. Or that feeling of marveling at my technical ability when I get my new wireless router to work. I walk away feeling like I've got the whole world figured out.

All of us would love to live in a world where we could solve a simple problem or push a button, and everything would fall into place. But we don't live in a world with that type of certainty. We live in a world where most of the time it all feels *uncertain*.

That's why we saw so many articles in 2020 trying to help us sort out our future and what it was going to look like. Articles like, "The Future of Stay-at-Home Work," or "How Covid Will Change Homeschooling Forever," or "How to Parent Fourth-Graders During a Pandemic." Okay, that last one wasn't real, but it should've been.

We all turned to anyone who could help us figure out the future, because the future felt so uncertain. And none of us had ever experienced such a prolonged and profound sense of uncertainty. Everything was turned on its head. So many of us felt like:

"I don't know how to do this."

"I don't have the skills."

"I don't have the resources."

So if *anyone* gave us the slightest bit of help believing things were going to be okay up ahead, we took it. Whether or not it was true or even possible!

There's a term out there you might have heard of called *liminal space*. *Liminal space* is used to describe a place or a time where you've left something behind, but you aren't quite somewhere else. Where you've left one stage, but you haven't arrived at the next one yet. Kind of like adolescence, where you've left childhood, but you aren't quite an adult. Or maybe it's the season where you're pregnant and you've left your years of not being a parent, but your child hasn't yet arrived in the world. Or you're engaged and you've left singleness behind, but you haven't yet said, "I do."

All of us lived in a liminal space during the pandemic year. We all left behind life as we knew it, but we still didn't know what life in the future was going to look like. And do you know what emotions and feelings are always associated with liminal spaces? Fear, confusion, worry, and doubt. And we all believe if we just knew more about the future, we'd be okay.

But even though we can't see what's ahead, there's something we can do. What if instead of trying to reach into the future, we instead turned our attention to the past? What if the key to moving forward in the midst of our uncertainty isn't "out there" at all? In fact, what if the best thing we could do to move forward is to move in the *opposite direction*?

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## TRUTH

Earlier in this series, we looked at the story of the Israelites' move to occupy the new territory of the Promised Land. We also read about the new territory the early church found themselves in. These were completely different situations, obviously, but so many of the experiences and the truths from these stories is the same. And one thing that was the same, that united these different groups of people separated by thousands of years, was the gathering around a table for a very particular and very significant meal.

When God freed the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, He asked the Israelites to remember that day by commemorating it with a meal. Here is what was said:

*This is a day to remember. Each year, from generation to generation, you must celebrate it as a special festival to the LORD. This is a law for all time. For seven days the bread you eat must be made without yeast. On the first day of the festival, remove every trace of yeast from your homes. Anyone who eats bread made with yeast during the seven days of the festival will be cut off from the community of Israel. On the first day of the festival and again on the seventh day, all the people must observe an official day for holy assembly. No work of any kind may be done on these days except in the preparation of food" (Exodus 12:14-16 NLT).*

This meal was known as the Passover meal because it commemorated the time when God "passed over" the Israelite houses sparing their firstborn. It recalled God's protection from the last plague when He was setting His people free from Egypt. The Passover meal had been observed throughout the people's history. But this meal wasn't just about food and drink. The Jewish people also did something very special at this meal: *they retold the story.*

As a family they would retell the entire story of their people leaving Egypt. For the Jewish people, this was the heart of the Passover meal. And when they told it, they didn't just hit the highlights. The idea was, the more details the better. So Jewish families would re-tell the story of God's faithfulness with wonder. They wanted the story to live in their minds and not be some distant memory. The story would go on for possibly hours. And so, year after year after year, the Jewish people would celebrate God by sitting around the table and remembering all of the things He had done for them. They never wanted to forget what God did and what He is capable of.

Now, fast forward thousands of years to the night before Jesus was crucified. And here, on this night, we find Jesus and His disciples sharing this very same Passover meal. But on this night and with this meal, Jesus gave the meal new meaning and a new purpose.

*When the time came, Jesus and the apostles sat down together at the table. Jesus said, "I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won't eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God."*

*Then he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. Then he said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come."*

*He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

*After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you" (Luke 22:14-20 NLT).*

In one moment, Jesus added new meaning to the Passover meal. He was saying: *Now when you eat this bread or drink this wine, I want you to remember Me. Remember what I have done for you, remember it was My body that was broken and remember it was My blood that was shed to demonstrate My great love for you. So no matter what circumstance is happening in your life, you will remember My great love for you is unchanging. Whenever you find yourself in a new season, or a new territory, or facing an uncertain future, and you are filled with fear, confusion, anxiety, or doubt, you will be able to look back in those moments and remember My love for you is steadfast.*

Looking back reminds us that we don't have to know the future to feel secure. **When we remember what God *did* for us, we can more easily trust what He *will* do for us.**

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## APPLICATION

I imagine what it would be like to retell the story of God's faithfulness in my own life like God's people did at their Passover meal—to think back on all the times and the moments where God showed up in my life.

I remember God chasing me and coming after me when I wasn't walking with or following after Him.

I remember when God gave me chance after chance and grace after grace when I was intentionally not wanting to listen to Him.

I remember when God put friends in my life to encourage me and help me when I felt confused and lost and alone.

I remember when God led me to a new church that helped me heal, when I wasn't sure I would ever walk in the doors of another church.

And when I look back, when I remember and revisit what God has done and what He has shown me, it gives me confidence to walk into an uncertain future knowing He has always been faithful and He will continue to be faithful.

Just like God's people, we need to take time to look back at how God has been present in our life. Ask yourself:

- What has God done in your life?
- What do you need to remember today?
- What has God given you?
- Who are the people God has used in your life?
- What do you need to remember God for today?

By remembering God, and talking about Him, it makes what Jesus has done for us come alive again. It makes what God has done real in the present—not just something that happened a long time ago. And all of us need a reminder that God is real in the present moment, because the uncertainty of future can distract us to forget. All of us are prone in the middle of fear to forget. So we've been given a way to remind ourselves of God's great love.

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## LANDING

All of us know that uncertainty is going to continue to play a role in our lives. It's just part of being human. Uncertainty is a part of the journey. And because it is, and because we'll never know what the next day holds, it's vital to always remember God's faithfulness to us. He has never forgotten us. He has never abandoned us. He will always be with us.

So let's remind ourselves and remind each other of these things. When we remember what God has done, we can trust what He will do in every situation and in every circumstance—past, present and future.

# Small Group Discussion



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When you were a kid, did you try to imagine what your life would look like when you were older? What did you imagine back then?
2. Do you tend to be someone who lives more in the present or in the future?
3. When you find yourself in situations that feel ambiguous, how does that make you feel?
4. Are there things in your life that serve as stones of remembrance for past seasons?
5. Why is it important to remember the past? What purpose does that serve? How might that be helpful for you?
6. Hindsight is always 20/20. Can you look back in your life and see evidence of God that you didn't recognize at the time but can see now?
7. What is one practical step you can take that will be helpful for you when you find yourself in new territory that will allow you to thrive in that new season?