

Looking back at lockdown

- What was your best and worst Lockdown experience?
- What have you discovered about yourself that you didn't know before?
- What have you discovered about God that you hadn't before?
- Have you encountered God in any new ways?
- What has this time enabled God to do in you?

Now try answering those questions in relation to the life and worship of the church.

Laying down stones

Joshua tells the Israelites to lay down stones as a memorial to remind them and future generations what God has *been* and *done* for them during their wilderness experience.

What would be the one thing you would put on your stone as a testimony to the nature or work of God during this Lockdown time?

I would say that God has shown me that I am good at being busy for the work of the kingdom but not so good at just 'being.' Just being in God's presence is a wonderful place to be and it has been so good to spend time there with no agenda or to-do list! As important as practical, physical Kingdom work is, what God craves the most is being with the ones he created and the ones he loves and being away from family has certainly showed me that during Lockdown. A hug is that most precious thing and God's embrace more precious still.

Leaving the wilderness

Read Deuteronomy 8

- What stood out to you from this passage?

You might like to pick up on some of the actions of God and their purposes (e.g., Verse 3: He let you hunger so that you might know...)

- God also talks about 'being careful' and offers warnings. Why are these important and what can we learn from these as we move forward as a church?

(E.g. Verse 2: You shall remember...so that he might humble you, testing you to know what's in your heart)

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- What can the re-emerging experience of the Israelites from 40 years in the wilderness and Jesus re-emerging after the temptations in the wilderness, tell us about how to re-emerge well into a post pandemic world?

Good news

It has been great for the church to get some positive press during the pandemic highlighting what we know is only a small proportion of the work that God is doing through his people.

- How can we build on this positive press and plant seeds into the soil that God has prepared?
- How can we ensure that we keep a missional gospel as well as a social gospel so that people come to know Jesus who inspires and powers our social response?
- What excites you about moving out of Lockdown? Is it the long-awaited haircut or the embrace of a relative?

Where next?

Read Isaiah 43: 19

- What new things do you think God might be calling us to do as individuals and as a church? What excites you about this and how do you want to be involved?