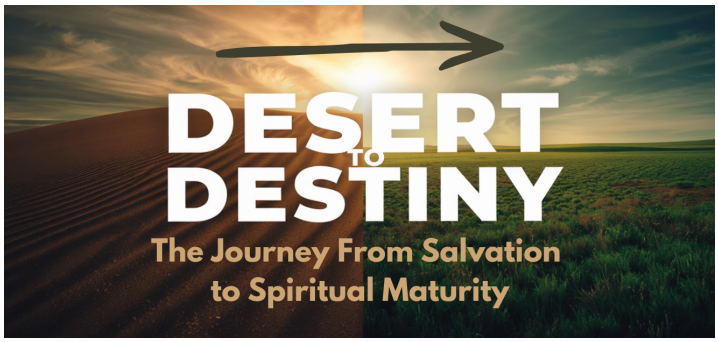

The Slow Fade
Exodus 32-34

When Something Takes God's Rightful Place

Big Idea: Even redeemed people can drift when they take their eyes off God.

I. Spiritual Drift [Exodus 32:1–6]

Application Q's:

Am I growing impatient with God's timing?
Have I begun trusting substitutes more than the Savior?
What am I trying to control instead of surrendering?

II. The Fallout [Exodus 32:7-20]

Application: Whatever you trust more than God, has become your golden calf – tear it down before it tears you away from Him.

III. Deliverance (Mercy that Restores) [Exodus 32:21-34:35]

Application: God welcomes repentance.
No failure is beyond His mercy.
But spiritual compromise is never harmless.
The safest place is daily obedience.

Question, Reading, Challenge, and Prayer

Question: What "golden calf" might be competing for God's rightful place in your heart, and what is one step you can take this week to put Christ back at the center?

Reading: [1] Read Joshua's challenge for Israel to put away their idols and choose whom they will serve, culminating in his declaration in Joshua 24. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
[2] As you prepare for next week's message, read Numbers 13–14. Observe how fear and unbelief kept Israel from entering the Promised Land, and consider how faith overcomes obstacles that seem impossible.

Challenge: Prayerfully identify one area of your life that has become a greater priority than your relationship with God, and intentionally replace it with a daily habit of prayer, Bible reading, or worship.

Prayer: Pray that God will reveal any hidden idols in your heart, give you the courage to surrender them completely, and strengthen your faith to keep Christ at the center of every area of your life.

[Exodus 32:1-6] When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, [24:18, Deuteronomy 9:9] the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to him, "Up, make us gods [32:23], who shall go before us. [13:21] As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 So Aaron said to them, "Take off the rings of gold that are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." [13:35-36, Judges 8:24-27] 3 So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. 4 And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf. [I Kings 12:28] And they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" [2 King 10:20] 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord [2 Kings 10:20] 6 And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink [cited in I Corinthians 10:7] and rose up to play. [Genesis 26:8, Judges 21:21]

[Isaiah 40:31] ... they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; [Psalm 103:5] they shall mount up with wings like eagles; [Exodus 19:4] they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

1. Waiting Is Active Trust, Not Passive Inactivity
   [Extraordinary Moments]
2. God Renews the Strength of Those Who Depend on Him
   [Endurance in Seasons of Intent Service]
3. Eagles Illustrate Rising Above Circumstances
   [The daily, ordinary faithfulness of life] [Tony Evans]

[Colossians 3:5] Put to death [Romans 8:13, Galatians 5:24] therefore what is earthly in you: [Romans 6:13] sexual immorality, [Ephesians 5:3,5] impurity, passion, [Romans 1:26] evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. [Job 31:24-26]

[Job 31:24-28] If I have made gold my trust or called fine gold my confidence, 25 if I have rejoiced because my wealth was abundant or because my hand had found much, 26 if I have looked at the sun when it shone or the moon moving in splendor, 27 and my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand, 28 this also would be an iniquity to be punished by the judges, for I would have been false to God above.

[Lamentations 3:22–23] The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

[1 John 1:9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[Romans 8:1] There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

[Psalm 139:23–24] Search me, O God, and know my heart . . . and lead me in the way everlasting.