



We hope you're enjoying our sermon series in the book of Exodus! We've got a little over a month left in this great book of the Bible. So far, we've seen Israel freed from slavery and cross the Red Sea. We've also seen God's provision for Israel in the wilderness repeatedly.

Today, we're going to see two things. First, Israel will battle for the first time with an enemy. Second, and this is where our focus will be, you see the value of other people in your life. The title of today's study is "You Can't Do It Alone." Many of us want to believe we can live life by ourselves. We may not live in isolation from others, but we often want to push people away. This could be because of pride, past pain, or being uncomfortable with vulnerability. However, in the Christian life, relationships are the name of the game. Exodus 17 and 18 show us, and for some of us, *remind* us of the need to let others into our lives. The Christian life is no solo sport; it is a group activity!

Key Passage: Exodus 17:8 - 18:27

Discussion Questions:

1. What significance does the phrase "you can't do it alone" hold in the context of the Christian life?
2. In what ways does the story of Moses, Aaron, and Hur holding up Moses' arms during the battle provide lessons for building supportive relationships?

When Moses lifted his hands, the Israelites would win the battle. When his hands would drop for being tired, the Israelites would begin to lose the battle. (Do you know how quickly your arms get tired?) This passage and the next one teach us many things, but one of those things is why we need others in our life. We need people who will lift our arms during the battle. Perhaps you've heard someone say, "Show me your friends, and I'll show you your future." That is true – especially when you're growing up. If you hang around the wrong people, you'll become the wrong kind of person. One of the most important decisions you'll make early in your life is the kind of people you allow to influence your life.

Why does this continue to be true today even if you're past the more formative years of life?

Prv. 13:20, "Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."

1 Corinthians 15:33, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.'"

3. Discuss the tendency for people, particularly as they age, to become more secluded and less connected with others. What are the implications of this tendency when facing life's battles?

On the one hand, we should be wise regarding our friendships; it's also easy to become more secluded

the older you get. One of our church leadership's most significant concerns for you is that when life hits the fan, and you end up in the hospital or you have trouble in your marriage, you have someone to turn to in a hurry. Those who are deeply connected at church with Christian friends, in their small group, or with people they serve with, those people are often the first at the hospital, the first to call, the first to bring a meal – that's what Christian Biblical relationships are all about. Do you have people in your lives like Aaron and Hur who are just content to be people who lift our arms while we're walking through the battle? Question – if life crumbled today, do you have other believers in your life who are ready to lift your arms during the battle?

4. Why is it unsustainable and detrimental for leaders to bear leadership's burdens alone? Why do we feel pressure to “go it alone” sometimes? What parallels can be drawn between Moses' leadership challenges and those we face in various leadership roles (family, work, or community)?

We need people who will ease the burden of life and leadership. You may not think of yourself as a leader, but we all lead something. You may lead your family, you may be a leader in the business, in your school, or on your team. Moses is the de facto leader of some 2 million people traveling across the wilderness to a new home. They've seen Moses hear from God and want to hear from God regarding their issues through Moses. So, he sits all day long in front of a long line, talking to people one at a time. (Eventually, Jethro sees this and pulls Moses aside to give him much-needed advice.)

When leaders try to do it all alone, not only do they wear themselves out, but they also wear their people out. Not only do they get frustrated, but other people get frustrated. Here are two things to remember when it comes to leadership:

#1 – The thing (whatever it is) is too heavy for you. Life in general, leading a family, leading a business, leading a team, leading an organization, or leading a small group. In a world where you are told that you must be everything to everybody, that you shouldn't have weaknesses, that you should be an expert in everything, and that you should give expert opinions on everything on social media, remember that the thing is too heavy for you.

#2 – You cannot do it (whatever it is) alone. This is true whether we talk about life, work, family, or career. Again, the Christian life was never meant to be a solo sport. Your church family should play a significant role in your life.

5. What practical steps does Jethro suggest to Moses to alleviate the burden of leadership, and how might these principles be applied in modern contexts?

In Exodus 18:21-22, Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, pulls him aside and gives him a plan for how to use other people to help him with the leadership responsibility. Jethro's plan, in a word, is delegation. Jethro says to look for able men of character who you can divide into leaders and let them judge the people. If any big decisions are above their heads, they can come to you, and for everything else, let other people decide!

If you're overwhelmed, it's time to lean into other people. Got a problem you can't solve? Are you in a battle and need other people to lift your arms? Perhaps you need to be vulnerable enough to approach a colleague or friend for help.

If you're isolated, it's time to lean into other people. How many leaders have we seen in all walks of life who self-destructed because they got isolated? Have you disconnected from others? At the office? In

your family? How about in the church?

6. What's one personal takeaway from today's study you can focus on this week?