

RULE #8

Trust God to deliver in His own unique way.

Goal:

To lead students to trust and expect God to act on their behalf in the midst of their challenges.

Introduction:

As your group members settle in for the meeting ask for specific testimonies of how they experienced the presence of God since the last gathering.

Having allowed ample time for sharing, recap the journey reminding the group of the previous seven rules / steps. Then ask this question:

Do you see a predominant theme running through the first seven rules?

Emphasize that Rob stresses in the book to trust God regardless of whether He responds as we would like or not. It's natural, though, to want God to DO something.

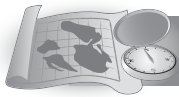
Now ask the question that appears in the study guide:

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being no faith and 10 being great faith, how confident are you God is going to act in the midst of your Red Sea? Explain your answer.

Summarize the discussion with a statement like:

Increasing our faith and expectation for God to act is the subject of our next rule / step, which is:

Trust God to deliver in His own unique way.



PREVIEW THE JOURNEY

Quickly retell the story of Exodus 14 and emphasize verses 21-29, the basis of Rule 8. Ask the attendees if they learned anything differently from verses 21-29 than from what they've probably seen in the movie, *The Ten Commandments* with Charlton Heston.

Ask the question from the study guide:

Let's assume after Moses calmed them down, the Israelites believed God would deliver them. Do you think they imagined the "parting of the sea method of deliverance"? Why or why not?

Have the members express Rule 8 in their own words.



PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY

The promises and experiences related to Rule 8 at times appear contradictory. Expect lively (even intense) discussion from your participants.

The Bible repeats a promise or truth about God's deliverance of His children. Have different members read these verses:

Deuteronomy 23:14; Psalm 34:19; Psalm 50:15; 2 Timothy 4:18

Ask the group to summarize the promise of the above verses.

In his book, Rob discusses three ways of deliverance: miraculous, providential, and mysterious. Make sure to reread Rob's definition and examples of each and summarize Rob's teaching for the group. Then ask:

Can you think of a time when God acted on your behalf in any of these three ways? Please be specific.

In preparation for the next discussion, make sure you thoroughly and prayerfully read Hebrews 11:35-40, Matthew 14:1-12, and Acts 7:54-60. If people haven't already mentioned, please interject something like:

We have the promise of God's deliverance but let's also look at the biblical examples of John the Baptist, Stephen, and the people of Hebrews 11:35-40. How do we reconcile these examples with God's promise?

Thinking about today, is every Christian healed? Saved from financial ruin? Privileged to see wayward children come home?

How do we reconcile these examples with God's promise?

There's no easy answer here. For whatever reasons (many of which are known only to God), God chooses to act in ways that seem contradictory to us. In the midst of our pain, though, He does want us to trust Him. His definition for specific situation may indeed be different than ours.



PROCEED ON THE JOURNEY

Be sensitive here. Some in the group may have started the study with the belief that God will always act on their behalf just as they want. This may be the first realization that God's ways may indeed be different than theirs. Ask:

How can you recognize or prepare yourself for the unique way God chooses to deliver you?

How can Job 1:20-22 and Daniel 3:16-17 help prepare you for how God chooses to work on your behalf?



PONDER THE JOURNEY

It's absolutely imperative people journal about Rule 8. If there have been great differences between their expectations and God's actions, this can actually intensify the journey. People may have mistakenly thought if they just proceed nicely in the journey, fill in all the blanks of the study guide, and participate in the discussion then God will "fix" everything. The problem is God's "fix" may not be their "fix." Encourage your group to spend time alone with God praying and journaling and hopefully getting to the point where they can say regardless of what happens, blessed be the name of the Lord.