



April 6, 2025

Kevin Sneed

Exodus 34:6-7

Introduction

This week's message explores the complex relationship between God's mercy and justice as revealed in Exodus 34:6-7, particularly focusing on understanding the challenging misconception of God punishing children for their parents' sins. Kevin Sneed explains that while sin's effects can be generational, God's grace is eternal. He emphasizes that this text doesn't mean children are directly punished for their parents' sins, but rather that sin's consequences naturally affect subsequent generations.

Key Texts:

Ex. 34:6-7; Deut. 24:16; Jer. 32:18-19; James 2:13; Num. 14:17-23; 1 Jn. 1:8-9

Icebreaker

What's one trait or habit you've noticed that you inherited from your parents - either positive or negative?

Discussion Questions

1. Kevin mentioned a quote from Tim Keller that modern culture believes “the thing we need salvation from is the idea that we need salvation.” How do you see this playing out in society today? How comfortable are you with the idea that you need salvation? Explain.
2. Why is it important that God is both forgiving and just? What kind of world would it be if God forgave without justice—or judged without mercy?
3. **Read Exodus 34:6-7 together as a group.** The text says God “does not leave the guilty unpunished; He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.” At first glance, without hearing this week's message, how do you think you would have understood this?

- a. This week's message aimed to clarify that these words have more to do with the ripple effects of previous generations' sins in the lives of those downstream. In what ways have you seen sin's effects pass through generations in your own family history?
 4. **Read Numbers 14:17-23 together as a group.** Here, Moses uses the words of Exodus 34 to petition God for mercy and forgiveness. After reading God's response in verses 20–23, how do you wrestle with the idea that future generations can still experience consequences for past sins? How does this impact your view of God's justice and mercy?
 5. What are some real-life examples where the decisions or sins of previous generations still affect communities today—locally or globally?
 6. How can the truth that “God's grace is eternal” give us hope as we face our own struggles or the baggage of previous generations? What might it look like to live from a place of grace rather than shame?
 7. How can your Community Group be praying for you and supporting you as you navigate any generational sin or trauma in your life? As much as you're able, lean into being vulnerable so that others may support you.
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Key Takeaways

- Sin's effects are generational, but God's grace is eternal.
 - God's character is overwhelmingly weighted toward mercy over judgment.
 - We are responsible for our own sins, not those of our parents.
 - Forgiveness doesn't always eliminate consequences.
 - Confession leads to God's faithful forgiveness.
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Notes