

UPCOMING EVENTS:

AGAPE THANKSGIVING MEAL

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RSVP for a Host Home today!

We want to encourage all of you to join us on Sunday, November 22nd for a shared meal in people's homes as we kick off our Christmas Advent Season. This will be a Thanksgiving type dinner with a time of reflection and joyful celebration.

SUPER SNACK SUNDAY

Help fill our eKids! snack pantry!

List of examples at Welcome Center.
(Feel free to drop any items off today or this next week)

ADVENT SEASON

This year at Element we are doing something we have never attempted in our few years of existence; we are celebrating a season of the church calendar called Advent. Advent is a time of sober reflection that should (and will, in our case) lead to a time of loud joy.

Advent takes place over the four weeks that lead up to Christmas, with each week being a reflection of Christmas (Christ's) fulfillment.

Daily Readings start tomorrow, Nov. 23rd

Pick up your Advent Booklet today and join an Agpae Dinner to celebrate!

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!

Thank you for joining us today. This is a short note to let you know that we know what you are thinking: It is hot and cramped in this room. We want to acknowledge with you that yes, the front room is full, the kids rooms are full, and it can get warm. We are working on alleviating this right now by building our own building on the land just north of us (we must be out of this one by December 2016).

There is a lot that goes into the process of Element having a permanent home, but we hope that today you are first drawn to Jesus before you are overwhelmed by anything else. If it gets too hot, we

may hand out popsicles to help you cool off and give you a sugar rush. If you would like a service that has open seats (and is cooler), you are invited to our 8:15am service. Please understand that all of these "challenges" are because of our love for Jesus, people, and growth that has come quickly. These are good things. We hope you will stay as we work to make more room for you to be part of the good thing Jesus is doing here. If you would like more information about our building process or how you can participate, you can visit: www.elementroots.org.

- The Element Team

LEGENDS OF THE FALL

TODAY'S VERSES:

Jude 1:11

Numbers 22:4-7

Genesis 12:2-3

Numbers 22:13-27

2 Peter 2:15

Ephesians 1:17-18

Luke 9:54

MY NOTES:

08

BALAAM

Jude 1:11

Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.

Welcome to Legends of the Fall, a series where we look at the bad guys in the Bible and realize that we are just as bad as they are! Trust me (Jon), it's a fun series that does not leave us in our brokenness, but helps us better understand God's Grace. This week we look at Balaam and his talking Donkey!

Who do you go to when you need help/advice?

Give an example of good advice and bad advice that you have been given.

Balaam is a pagan prophet, a seer, and a diviner. He is a smart guy who knows how to "see" the future based off reading patterns in animals. He had to know animals, flight patterns, and even claimed he was able to look at the liver of a dead animal to help predict the future. He was also believed to have claimed to be a sorcerer that could influence human events to bring about his desired outcome. Balak, King of the Moab people, wants Balaam to help him destroy the Israelites because he fears them.

How did you respond when your parents told you no while growing up?

Where in your life has God told you no?

God told Balaam "NO!" but just like us, Balaam asked God multiple times hoping God would change his mind. Balaam wanted to go with the Moabites, but God did not give His consent. God said, "if you go, only do what I say." God did not want Balaam to curse the Israelites, but eventually gave Balaam permission to only go physically.

In what ways do you compromise right belief to better fit into the culture around you?

How do you respond to God when God says no?

Balaam did not care that God said no to him, he proceeded anyway. Balaam became God's adversary, just like us when we refuse to listen to God.

Read Numbers 22:22-27

What would you do if the object you were mad at (a hammer, a dog, your washing machine) started to talk to you and your misplaced anger?

How has God surprised you?

The original hearers/readers of this story would find it full of humor and irony. Donkeys only have one look, glass-eyed dumbness ...and yet a donkey upstages the most well-known prophet of the ancient world.

- Balaam is supposed to be seer. He is supposed to understand the movement of animals to see the future, yet he can't control his own donkey.
- Balaam is a prophet. He should be able to see and control spiritual matters, but he is almost killed three times for failing to see what God is doing right in front of him.

The donkey sees it, the prophet does not.

How have you failed to see what God is doing directly in front of you?

Like Balaam, God frequently uses areas of pride in our own lives to teach us a lesson.

Where in life are you prideful?

How has God humbled you?

In the end we learn two important things from Balaam's story.

- First, that God has revealed Himself so we can have a right understanding of Him. The God who is unknown has made Himself known to His people. If we don't know who God is, we have missed the entire point of our existence.
- The second thing God wants Balaam, and us, to learn is the word "NO." The bible is full of stories about people who request something of God and God says no. It is fundamental to the kind of person God is, and to the nature of prayer, that God always reserves the right to say no.

God is gracious to His people by laying some boundaries on our lives.

Name some boundaries that God has put on your life?

How have you failed to trust those boundaries?

The scriptures constantly promise God will be with us, and that is a greater reward than anything. Jesus comes in grace to us, just like He did to Balaam, to show us the truth.

How are you living the truth of who Jesus is in front of those who need to see and hear it the most?