**August 24 Sermon - Pastor Keith Moore
The Exodus 36 Initiative: How to Get an Answer From God**

**Focus Passage: Jeremiah 33:3 & Selected verses**

## **Icebreaker Question:** If you could ask God one question and get an immediate audible answer, what would it be?

## **Leader Transition:** Last week, we launched *The Exodus 36 Initiative*, calling our church to trust God together as we work to eliminate our debt and fuel His mission at Dogwood. But the heart of this initiative is not money, it’s prayer. Pastor Keith reminded us that this is really about learning to ask God a specific question, listen for His answer, and then respond in faith. Today, we’ll explore practical steps on how to seek God’s guidance and how to listen when He responds.

## **Discussion Questions:**

### **1. Read Jeremiah 33:3. What does this verse promise about prayer and God’s response?**

Leader Note: The emphasis is not just that we can pray but that God will answer. Pastor Keith highlighted that prayer is revealed knowledge. God shows us His will in ways we can recognize. This verse reminds us that God desires dialogue with us, not distance. Cross-reference Psalm 17:6, where David says, “I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God.”

### **2. Why is setting aside time important if we want to hear from God?**

Leader Note: God is not in a hurry and often speaks when we slow down. Pastor Keith pointed to Elijah hearing God’s whisper in a “gentle breeze” after noise and chaos (1 Kings 19) and Moses spending forty years before God revealed His plan. Leaders can remind the group that time is an act of faith, making space says, “God, You’re worth waiting on.” Psalm 46:10 says, “Be still and know that I am God.”

### **3. How does praying specifically change the way we relate to God?**

Leader Note: Jesus often asked people, “What do you want me to do for you?” God invites us to bring our real needs with clarity. Specific prayer not only focuses us but also helps us recognize God’s answer when it comes. In the context of The Exodus 36 Initiative, that means praying, “Lord, do You want me to participate, and if so, what do You want me to give?” Philippians 4:6 also calls us to “present your requests to God.”

### **4. Pastor Keith emphasized balanced prayer (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication, and Silence). Which of these is easiest for you, and which is hardest?**

Leader Note: Balanced prayer keeps us from only asking God for things. Adoration puts our eyes on who God is, confession keeps our hearts clear, thanksgiving reminds us of His faithfulness, supplication invites us to ask specifically, and silence allows space to listen. Silence is often the hardest in our noisy world, but it’s where we hear God best. 1 Samuel 3:10 shows young Samuel praying, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”

### **5. What are the different ways God speaks, according to the sermon?**

Leader Note: The sermon outlined four: through Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16), through the Holy Spirit’s promptings (John 16:13), through wise counsel from others (Proverbs 24:6), and through our circumstances (Nehemiah 2:11–16). Encourage the group to share which of these they’ve experienced. Point out that God’s answers are often confirmed by more than one of these voices, keeping us from relying on feelings alone.

### **6. What’s the danger of asking God for guidance but not obeying what He’s already told us?**

Leader Note: God doesn’t give new guidance if we’re ignoring the guidance He’s already given. Disobedience closes our ears. James 1:22 reminds us to “be doers of the word, not hearers only.” God’s guidance is not just information; it’s transformation, and obedience prepares us for deeper answers.

### **7. How might praying and listening in this way transform both our giving in The Exodus 36 Initiative and our personal walk with God?**

Leader Note: Hearing from God about giving isn’t about numbers; it’s about trust. When the Israelites obeyed in Exodus 36, there was “more than enough.” In the same way, when we pray, listen, and obey, our faith grows and God’s mission expands. Leaders can remind the group that this is as much about spiritual formation as it is about church finances.