

The Humble Servant

What commitments and promises have you made to God?

What was it that you told God you were going to do for Him?

- Do you remember the moments in which you made those commitments?
- ... the passion you felt for God
- ... your desire to step out in faith and do something wonderful for Christ
- ... you were going to be that man/woman—truly sold out to God.

... but something happened.

- Your parents told you to calm down
- Your spouse thought you were just being emotional.
- Your friends said you were becoming too radical, a religious fanatic

Suddenly, what was supposed to have been a pivotal moment in your life never happened.

You begin to settle for what was—no longer hoping for what could be.

That's kind of what happened to Moses.

After killing the Egyptian slave master Moses ran off into the wilderness and hid out for 40 years and now, he is 80.

Today we are going to see Moses come to grips with the reality that God's plan for his life is not finished ... it may have been on pause ... but it is not over.

... so, let's pick up where we left off last week.

⁹ "Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt." (Exod. 3:9-10)

1. The Servant Is Sent

¹⁰ "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt." (Exo 3:10)

God says, "I will send you to Pharaoh so you can bring my people out of Egypt."

- This was a command not a request.
- It was a declaration not an invitation.
- God's word is to be acted upon—not merely debated and considered.

If you ever hope to fully realize spiritual victory in your life you have got to lay aside your own wishes and embrace God plan for your life.

God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him. - Jim Elliot

Jesus said that *if we loved Him we would keep His commandments* but the truth is that one of the greatest challenges in our relationship with God is obedience.

- **Abel** was willing, but **Cain** was not
- **Lot** willfully chose to live in the city of Sodom
- **Achan** disobeyed God's clear commands and took Canaanite silver and hid it in his tent.

- **David** slept with his neighbor's wife and had his neighbor killed to cover up the pregnancy.
- **Jonah** heard God's call—but ran in the opposite direction.
 - **Enoch** walked with God.
 - **Noah** built an ark and preached righteousness for 120 years.
 - **Shadrach, Meshack, and Abendigo** walked into a fiery furnace and came out smelling like a rose.
 - **Daniel** went into a lion's den and came out alive.
 - **Peter**, when told to quit preaching said, “we ought to obey God rather than man” and he preached and called a generation to Jesus.

All these men “knew” God's will for their lives.

... they all understood ... but they did not all obey.

Habitual disobedience is symptomatic of an unwilling heart.

... a servant is someone who is humble and willing to be sent.

... someone who gladly hears the master's voice.

*At a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Bobby Richardson, former New York Yankee second baseman, offered a prayer that is a classic in brevity and poignancy: “**Dear God, Your will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else. Amen.**”*

“But Nathan, if I knew what God wanted me to do, I would do it.” **Would you?**

Sometimes we give ourselves too much credit.

Sometimes we prefer excuses to obedience.

Let me ask this, “*are you presently obedient to the things you know?*”

To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge, to find the will of God is the greatest discovery, and to do the will of God is the greatest achievement. George W. Truett

I really believe that was what the Lord Jesus was hinting at when he said, “*if you’ll be faithful over a few things, I’ll make you ruler over many.*”

If you’ll obey what you already know God will give you more to know.

God is **calling** Moses ... **sending** Moses ... but Moses has his doubts.

11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exo 3:11)

Although this is a short verse there are a number of things happening in it.

- Moses displays a feeling of **inadequacy**— “*who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh...*” (Isn’t there someone else better suited for this?)
- Moses expresses a need for **information**—“**Who** am I that I should go...” (How can God use me?)
- But also, Moses exhibits a **resistance** to God’s call. “*Who am I that I should go ...*” (Why me Lord?)

Certainly, Moses’ feelings of **inadequacy** and **insufficiency** contributed to his resistance—I think we all get that.

... but we must remember that we are simply the vessel ... GOD is the power/sufficiency

... when God says “go ye into all the world” He never means for us to **go** alone.

12 And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain." (Exo 3:12)

I love that word, “certainly.” “Certainly, I will be with you...”

Not only are God’s commands clear and certain ... so are His assurances.

... and yet, Moses remains reluctant ...

13 Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" (Exo 3:13)

2. The Message is Given

“What shall I say ...”

14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exo 3:14)

Moses asks, “how can I do this” and God responds, you can do this because “I Am That I Am has sent you.”

Moses is sent by God to deliver God’s message ... that in a nut-shell is evangelism.

... we are to make ourselves the herald, the mouthpiece, of God’s message.

... it is not our job to make God’s message plateable or reasonable ... it is our job to tell it.

Certainly, Moses wants Pharaoh to believe the message, obey God, and set the Jewish slaves free ...

... but at the end of the day Moses is not responsible for Pharaoh’s response.

So, Moses asks the obvious question anyone in his position would ask:

Exodus 4:1 Then Moses said, "What if they will not believe me or listen to what I say? For they may say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.'"

Isn't this the same excuse that we make for not telling others about the good news of Jesus Christ.

... what if they don't believe me ... what if they say "no" ... what if they think I'm crazy?

Let me put you minds at ease ... many will not believe.

According to the Bible all people are born dead in sin (Eph 2:1).

... **Romans 8:7** tells us that because of Adam and Eve's sin everyone is spiritually dead and hostile to Christ.

... **1 Cor. 2:14** says the natural man *does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them.*

... and if that was the end of the story we would all be hopeless BUT IT'S NOT!

²⁵ "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes (Ezek. 36:25-27)

This is God's promise to us! ... but we have no idea where or when this will happen.

This is why we cast the seed of the gospel indiscriminately everywhere with the hope that the Holy Spirit will bring life where before there was no life.

As the Apostle Paul said, *"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So, neither he who plants, nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."*

This means that people need to hear the gospel in order to be saved and we pray that God will send His Holy Spirit to water and give life.

Moses had the same reluctance to speak to Pharaoh as we do to tell our neighbor about Christ.

... what if they don't believe me

... what if they don't believe my message is from the God

Even the prophet Isaiah expressed the reality of people NOT BELIEVING the good news.

Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? (Isa. 53:1)

Moses says to God, "how can I do this?" ... so, God tells him and shows him.

... God says, "Moses you can do this because you have all of my power." Look ...

² The LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" And he said, "A staff." ³ Then He said, "Throw it on the ground." So, he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. ⁴ But the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand and grasp it by its tail"-- so he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand-- ⁵ "that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you." (Exo 4:2-5)

I won't read the whole passage, but God gives Moses three signs showing His sovereign power ...

- Moses' rod turns into a serpent and then back into a rod— this was to illustrate to Moses that God has **power over Satan**.
- Then Moses' hand is covered with leprosy and then healed—this was to show that God has **power over sin and the flesh**.
- Finally, Moses takes the water from the Nile pours it onto the land and it turns to blood (Egypt worshipped the Nile as the giver of life) —this showed that God had power over every false religion and that He was the only true giver of life.

But even after all this Moses was still filled with self-doubt.

¹⁰ Then Moses said to the LORD, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." (Exo 4:10)

Lord, I don't know how to talk ... I get tongue tied ... I'll mess up.

And here that God says something that is totally awesome.

¹¹ The LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹² "Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say." (Exo 4:11-12)

That almost sounds like an echo of the great commission ... "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel ... and lo, I am with you always even to the ends of the earth."

If you have God with you what else could you possibly need?

But Moses is an 80-year-old man and he is still consumed with his own weaknesses ... so much so that he moves beyond reluctance and objection and begins to beg God

¹³ But he said, "Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever You will." (Exo 4:13)

O Lord, please send someone else."

God is simultaneously a God of Justice and a God of Grace!

He is both Mercy and Truth!

... and this is how it looks.

¹⁴ Then the anger of the LORD burned against Moses, and He said, "Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently. And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. ¹⁵ "You are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. (Exo 4:14-15)

In His justice God is angry in His grace God gives Moses what he wants

... God says, alright I let your brother Aaron be your mouthpiece.

BUT WE NEED TO GO ON RECORD ...

... this was less than God's perfect plan.

... this is the intersection of **God's sovereign will** and **Moses' human responsibility**.

... we will see later in Exodus that there were times when Aaron was used of God and times when Aaron hurt the work of God.

... there were times when Aaron's place in leadership was more of a judgment than blessing.

- Who built the golden calf idol that the people worshiped Aaron?
- Who joined with Miriam to usurp Moses authority—Aaron.
- Who sided with the 10 faithless spies—Aaron?

God is sovereign over all, but our choices and actions affect the quality and outcome of things.

... it is always good and right to trust and obey.

- God sends us to tell people who are blind, deaf, and lost ... and we should tell them.
- There are others who may be more talented and more qualified ... but our hope is not in our abilities ... our hope is in God.

God makes the difference in everything.

... and so, Moses goes where he is sent to tell the message he has been given.

3. The Mission is Specific

¹⁸ Then Moses departed and returned to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Please, let me go, that I may return to my brethren who are in Egypt, and see if they are still alive." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace." (Exo 4:18)

Moses turns his back to the life he had known for 40 years and goes to Egypt to speak to Pharaoh ...

...not Babylon, not to Assyria, not Persia ...

... not to renew old acquaintances in Egypt ... but to tell Pharaoh, "GOD SAYS, LET MY PEOPLE GO!"

There were a thousand things Moses could have done ... but those were not the things God told Moses to do.

... as the old saying goes, "*one of the greatest failures is to be a success at the wrong thing.*"

God **sent** Moses, God gave Moses **a Message** to tell, and God gave Moses a **specific mission** to accomplish.

... but there is another better servant who is greater than Moses, and that someone is Jesus.

... Jesus is God's ultimate humble servant.

Sent by God: *Jesus came to do the will of the Father*

Message was from God: *Jesus told his disciples if you seen and heard me, you've seen and heard the father.*

Mission was specific: *Jesus came to this earth to pay the debt we could not pay that he did not owe.*

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Christ some 2000 years ago ...

... but hundreds of years before Christ's birth the prophet Isaiah foretold of that birth

... Isaiah foretold that Jesus would be **sent** by the Father **with a specific message** and for a **specific purpose**.

¹⁰ But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. ¹¹ As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. (Isa. 53:10-11)

Jesus, in obedience to God the Father, came to die so that we might have life and that we might have it abundantly.

How can you refuse Him?