

Moses

Part 5

Preface: Just a couple quick thoughts that I think are important to cover as we continue in the story of Moses. We cover a lot in this part with faith and works tied together and Moses's willingness/unwillingness to obey.

We see God appearing to Moses and asking of him. It could be misunderstood that God is more interested in what Moses can do for him than in having relationship with Moses. What we find is that the deep relationship that Moses develops with God is tied to his willingness to serve God and obey Him.

It's also important to remind ourselves that Christianity is not tied to "what can I do for God?", but rather the central theme of Christianity is "This is what Christ has done for me!"

1 John 4:19 NKJV

We love Him because he first loved us.

God demonstrated His love towards us first. The good works we do should always come from the place of "Because He first loved me" and not our religious attempt to gain right standing with God by what we do.

With that it is very important to note that there is a difference between good works and obedience. Good works can be many things, but obedience to God is our response to His voice and leading.

The kind of relationship we have with God is directly connected to our willingness to follow him and obey. We can go to church and do many good things yet fail to follow him or obey Him.

In order for the Disciples to have relationship with Jesus they had to follow him when he called. The kind of relationship they had with

Jesus was ultimately tied to their willingness to follow and obey. Judas followed followed at first but his heart wondered and he was disobedient.

In the beginning God made a Garden and then he made Adam and gave him a job, the task of tending the Garden.

In perfect paradise, before the fall of man and the curse of sin, God gave man a job. Revelation 22:3 “No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.”

Here is Biblical truth that is not preached often, Work is important to God.

In regard to our Relationship with God, our obedience to God and good works really are tied together?

James 1:18 NKJV

But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

In Exodus 3 - God appears to Moses in a burning bush:

Vs. 16 - Go, assemble the elders of Israel...

Vs. 17 tell them “I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt”

Vs. 18 - God said, “The elders of Israel will listen to you.”

Vs. 19 - “But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him...”

Vs. 21 “And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people

Exodus 4 NIV

1 Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you’?”

- The chapter begins with Moses responding to God in conversation: “What if they do not believe me or listen to me”
- It wasn’t wrong for Moses to ask in Exodus 3:11; “*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?*” this made sense considering how great the task and God answered his question in Exodus 3:12 with: “*I will certainly be with you.*”
- Moses’ questions reveals that he is about to go on a journey with God and his relationship is just getting started. At this point he has more questions than faith.

It was good when Moses had no confidence in the flesh; but it was bad that he lacked confidence in God. In view of the burning bush, the voice of God, and the divine encounter, there really was no place for Moses to question God. (Guzik)

- But God in His great grace and patience answers Moses without condemnation.

Vs. 2

Then the Lord said to him, “What is that in your hand?”

“A staff,” he replied.

- Don’t let this pass you by...
- When Moses felt like he had nothing. Not one fancy suit, no fancy title, no impressive following of people and most likely no money or even a gift to present to Pharaoh. God used what Moses had in his hand...

Note to self: “If God is in it... that’s all you need”

- This reflects the amazing principle of how God empowers and uses people. After 40 years in the wilderness, shepherding his Father-in-Laws flock the only thing Moses has is a staff...
- That staff probably fit comfortably in his hand.
- It might have looked like just an old stick the rest of the world but to Moses it was familiar and went with him on many journeys.
- God can take a simple stick and use it for his glory.

It's just like God to take what's in your hand and use it for his glory.

- God used what was in David's hand - 5 smooth stones and a sling shot to kill a giant. (1 Samuel 17:49).
- God used the jawbone of a donkey in Samson's hand to kill 1000 Philistines (Judges 15:15).
- God used five loaves and two fish in the hand of a little boy to feed 5000. (John 6:9).
- That rod in Moses's hand will soon part the Red Sea. It would strike a rock and water come forth out of it. It will be raised over a battle and Israel win. That simple stick will soon be called the rod of God (Exodus 4:20 and 17:9)

God is still in the business of using what is in your hand even when it seems you don't have much.

Story: I heard a story about a man named Walt. Walt only had a sixth-grade education, but had a deep desire to teach a Sunday school class.

He approached the church leadership and they told him they didn't have any openings for a teacher. Walt politely insisted and the leader told him: *"Go out and get a class. Anybody you find is yours."*

Walt then went out and found a group of young boys playing marbles on the sidewalk. He sat down, played marbles with them, won their interest, and started teaching them.

One of the young boys on the sidewalk was a boy named Howard Hendricks. Howard got saved and discipled because of Walt. Howard went on to become a known Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary. After 60 years of teaching Howard Hendricks is remembered as one of the most influential Christian educators, authors and leadership mentors of the 20th century.

During his time teaching he mentoring a few people young men you might have heard of:

1. Tony Evans
2. Chuck Swindoll
3. Andy Stanley
4. David Jeremiah

Howard Hendricks was lead to Jesus and had a huge impact on our nation for Christ because of a man named Walt who took what was in his hand and followed Jesus...

Vs. 2-9

2 Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?"
"A staff," he replied.

3 The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground."

Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. **4** Then the Lord said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. **5** "This," said the Lord, "is so 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.”

6 Then the Lord said, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, the skin was leprous—it had become as white as snow.

7 “Now put it back into your cloak,” he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.

8 Then the Lord said, “If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first sign, they may believe the second. **9** But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.”

- Before God takes on the task of convincing the Elders of Israel or even Pharaoh. He first takes on the task of convince Moses.
- In defense of Moses, I believe the story would go the same for you and I. Think of the irony here: Moses is talking to God from a burning bush and Moses is still struggling to wrap his mind around this calling.
- I believe this is proof that we are spiritual being having a human experience rather than humans beings having a spiritual experience.
- This is proof that you can be in in God’s presence, but yet the flesh and insecurities are still there. Every time God has ever spoken to me about something, I’ve still walked away wondering how God is going to do it.
- Even though God gives Moses a clear strategy. The staff and cast to the ground, the hand in the cloak, the water on the ground. Moses has never seen anything like this in his life.

- It goes well with the saying: The Supernatural is Natural to God...

Vs. 10-17

10 Moses said to the Lord, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.”

11 The Lord said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? **12** Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

13 But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

14 Then the Lord’s anger burned against Moses and he said, “What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you. **15** You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. **16** He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. **17** But take this staff in your hand so you can perform the signs with it.”

Moses questions himself.

- Honestly I think a sense of self awareness, is a sign of a good leader.
- When I get around people that are overly confident it concerns me...
- In Ministry: When I hear someone say no problem, I got this; my heart says oh boy I hope so...
- When I hear someone say if God doesn’t help me I’m in trouble, it gives me hope...

Vs. 10

10 Moses said to the Lord, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.”

- The truth is Moses was well educated and well spoken. Stephen tells us in **Acts 7:22** “Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.”
- This tells us Moses is pretending to underestimate himself to try and disqualify himself from the task God is giving him.
- What’s dangerous about this is - Moses without saying it is telling God he knows something God doesn’t.
- Whenever God asks any of us to do something and we rebuttal his request, without knowing it we are treat God like a man.

Vs. 11 - God responds to Moses

The Lord said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord?”

- Bottom line: If Moses was a poor speaker, was this news to God? Does God have trouble keeping track of who is deaf, who is blind, and who is mute? Does Moses really think God made a mistake here?
- If Moses was a poor speaker, it didn’t matter – God said, “I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.” By extension, God is sufficient for us, no matter what real or imagined inadequacies we have.

Vs. 12-15

12 Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

13 But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

14 Then the Lord’s anger burned against Moses...

- Finally, Moses was done with excuses and showed the real state of his heart. Simply, he would much rather that God send someone else. His problem wasn’t really a lack of ability; it was a lack of willingness.
 - God was not angry when Moses asked, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11).
 - He was not angry when Moses asked, “Who should I say sent me?” (Exodus 3:13).
 - He was not angry when Moses disbelieved God’s Word and said, “suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice” (Exodus 4:1).
 - He was not even angry when Moses falsely claimed that he was not eloquent in speech. (Exodus 4:10)
 - but God was angry when Moses was just plain unwilling.
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- There is an old saying; “God is not looking for someone who is able, He is looking for someone who is available.”

Closing: