

**Big Idea:** God still loves us... even when we don't believe in ourselves.

**Primary Scripture:** Exodus 3:10-17

**Supporting Scripture:** Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 12:9

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**CAPTURE (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)**

- Picture this: you're sitting in a small office at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in 1962, and your job is to pick the people who will literally risk their lives to be shot into space.
- You're looking at test pilots, military heroes, all people with perfect records and nerves of steel who will become the first Americans to leave Earth and come back alive.
- Jim Lovell was one of those chosen.
- Early in training, Jim admitted he constantly second-guessed himself.
- He was surrounded by guys with better test scores, stronger records, and more natural confidence.
- Yet he would go on to fly four space missions, including commanding Apollo 13—a mission where an explosion 200,000 miles from Earth left his crew with no way home.
- For four days, the world watched as Lovell calmly led his team through what NASA called a "successful failure," bringing them safely back to Earth against impossible odds.
- All that from a guy who struggled to believe in himself.
- Have you ever felt like when you look around, other people have more talent, more faith, more skill and you're somehow behind everyone else?
- If so, you're in good company.
- Today, in our third week of our ***Messed Up*** series, we'll meet someone who felt the exact same way.
- His name was Moses. And when God gave him what should have been the opportunity of a lifetime.

- Instead, he basically told God, “I think You might have the wrong person. Maybe You should ask someone else.”
- Tonight, we’re going to see what happened when someone drowning in self-doubt came face to face with a God who saw something they couldn’t see in themselves.
- And I think we’ll find that it just might be possible that this same God sees something in you, too.

### **SCRIPTURE (What does God’s Word say?)**

- Moses was someone who saw himself as someone who messed up and just didn’t have what it takes.
- God doesn’t walk away from people when they fall short.
- In those moments, God tends to lean in, speak, and call them to do something great anyway.
- To understand what happens next, you need to know that Moses had just experienced something incredible.
- While tending sheep in the wilderness, he noticed a bush burning in the distance. But as he got closer, he realized something impossible was happening—the bush was on fire but wasn’t being consumed by the flames.
- As Moses approached to investigate, God called out to him by name from within the burning bush.
- In that moment, God revealed that He had been watching His people suffer in Egypt and was ready to act
- God wasn’t going to do this alone. He wanted Moses to play a key role in securing Israel’s freedom.

<sup>10</sup> “Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.” (Exodus 3:10 – NLT)

- God was essentially telling Moses, “You’re the guy. I’m sending **you** to free my people.”
- But Moses didn’t respond with, “I’m honored.” He didn’t even ask for details.

***11 But Moses protested to God, “Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?” (Exodus 3:11 – NLT)***

- Moses is not just questioning the mission—he’s questioning himself.
- Now, if you’ve been here for the last few weeks of our series, you’re probably noticing a pattern: **God doesn’t pick the wrong person.**

***12 God answered, “I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain.” (Exodus 3:12 – NLT)***

- God basically said, “I’ve got you.”
- It’s big deal that God is promising to be with Moses every step of the way, but we can understand why Moses might want slightly more reassurance.

***13 But Moses protested, “If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ they will ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what should I tell them?” 14 God replied to Moses, “I am who I am. Say this to the people of Israel: I am has sent me to you.” (Exodus 3:13-14 – NLT)***

- Moses’ anxiety was riding high. He was concerned he wouldn’t know how to respond to people. He was worried he wouldn’t have answers.
- God’s response cuts right through Moses’ worry.
- Essentially, God was saying, “You don’t need all the answers. You just need Me.”
- When God referred to Himself as “I AM,” He was revealing something powerful about who He is—constant, eternal, unchanging, and all-powerful. It was His way of saying, “I am **everything** you need.”

***15 God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations. (Exodus 3:15 – NLT)***

- God was fulfilling His promises and unfolding a story that’s been in motion since the beginning.

<sup>16</sup> “Now go and call together all the elders of Israel. Tell them, ‘Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—has appeared to me. He told me, “I have been watching closely, and I see how the Egyptians are treating you. <sup>17</sup> I have promised to rescue you from your oppression in Egypt. I will lead you to a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live.”” (**Exodus 3:16-17 – NLT**)

- God didn’t send Moses in blind. He laid out the plan, confirmed His presence, and gave Moses everything he needed to move forward.
- The same God who saw Moses' potential when Moses couldn't see it himself never left his side.
- This isn't just an ancient story about Moses. It's the story of everyone who's ever stared at a challenge and thought, "There's no way I can do this."
- Thankfully, God's response never changes: "You're not doing it alone."

### **INSIGHTS (What might this Scripture mean?)**

#### **1. God sees more in us than we see in ourselves.**

- When God told Moses, “I’m sending you to Pharaoh,” Moses’ first question wasn’t “Who are you?” ... it was, “**Who am I?**”
- In Moses’ mind, he wasn’t a leader, He was a failure.
- God didn't see Moses' past mistakes or current insecurities. He saw the person He created and loved deeply, and someone who could accomplish the impossible.
- He didn't just hype up Moses by listing all his qualifications. He just said five simple yet powerful words:
  - “*I will be with you.*”
- What God **sees** matters more than what we **feel**.
- When God looks at you, He sees someone worth calling. He sees someone worth loving, flaws and all.
- The same God who called Moses sees more in you than you see in yourself.

## 2. You don't need all the answers to say yes to God.

- Moses didn't just feel insecure, he also felt unprepared.

***13 But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" (Exodus 3:13 – NLT)***

- Moses was essentially saying, "What if they ask me questions I can't answer? What if I don't know what to say?"
- We do the same thing all the time! We delay obedience until we have a complete roadmap.

***14 God replied to Moses, "I am who I am. Say this to the people of Israel: I am has sent me to you." (Exodus 3:14 – NLT)***

- God doesn't expect us to be experts. He just expects us to trust Him.
- If God calls us to something, He will give everything we need to respond.

***19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20 – NLT)***

- Jesus was sending them into the world to fulfill His mission, much like God sent Moses.
- He's saying, "You're not going alone."

## 3. God's plans depend on your willingness... not on your confidence.

- Moses was full of doubts. Look at the questions he asked.
  - "Who am I?"
  - "What do I say?"
  - "What if they don't believe me?"
- Moses' initial response to God was, "Please send someone else!"
- God didn't change His mind. He stuck with Moses through every doubt, every excuse, every fear.

- God wasn't didn't need Moses to be ready—He just needed Moses to trust Him.
- That hasn't changed. God still uses people who have a messy past and a lack of confidence.
- When we feel inadequate, we're more likely to lean on Him instead of trying to do everything ourselves. And that's when His power really shows up.

<sup>9</sup> *Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. (2 Corinthians 12:9 – NLT)*

- God didn't wait for Moses to feel qualified—He saw potential that Moses couldn't see in himself. And He's looking at you the same way.

### **ACTION (How could we live this out?)**

#### **1. Remind yourself of God's promise.**

- Go out of your way this week to let God's truth be louder than your doubts and insecurities.
- Find as many ways as possible to remind yourself of God's promise in the first part of Exodus 3:12.

<sup>12</sup> *God answered, "I will be with you. (Exodus 3:12a – NLT)*

- Put it somewhere you'll see it every day.
- Each time you see it, remember that you don't have to feel confident; you just need to remember that God is always with you.
- Consider taking it a step further and trying to memorize it by the end of the week.
- When we hide God's Word in our hearts, He can remind us of these truths exactly when we need them most.

#### **2. Trade excuses for the truth.**

- As soon as God started telling him the plan, Moses immediately jumped in with:

- “Who am I?”
- “What if they don't believe me?”
- There's even a point in the next chapter when Moses tries this one out:
  - “I'm not very good with words... I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled.”
- Moses was looking for any reason to talk God into picking someone else.
- We usually aren't any better, and we also have excuses:
  - “I'm too young.”
  - “I don't know enough.”
  - “What if I mess up?”
- God didn't accept Moses' excuses, and He won't accept yours either—because He knows they're not true.
- This week, identify one excuse that's been holding you back from something God might be calling you to do. Then replace that excuse with the truth we learned from the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9.

<sup>9</sup> ***“My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9 – NLT)”***

- Don't let fear have the final word. Let God's truth be louder.

### **3. Help someone else see what God sees.**

- Think of one person who might be feeling unseen or overlooked. Then tell them something specific you see in them that God can use.
- Keep it simple and keep it real. Sometimes, one word of encouragement is all it takes to help someone see themselves the way God sees them.