

Equipped for God's Work

How God Prepares His People for Service

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By Matthew Allen

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Introduction

Every generation of believers must learn again that God does His greatest work through ordinary people who are willing to trust Him. Scripture is filled with men and women who were called, shaped, tested, and strengthened for a purpose larger than themselves. Their stories remind us that faith is a life of obedience.

This study, *Equipped for God's Work*, traces that truth through the lives of faithful servants across the Bible. From Noah to Jesus, we see that God never calls without also equipping. He prepares hearts before He sends hands. Each lesson shows a different aspect of how God works in His people to accomplish His will: faith that obeys, courage that endures, grace that restores, and surrender that trusts.

Our goal in this series is not simply to admire their faith, but to develop our own. The same God who strengthened Noah to build, Joshua to lead, and Mary to believe is still shaping His people today. Every challenge, every act of obedience, and every step of faith is part of His process of equipping us for service in His kingdom.

As you study these lessons, you'll see that:

- **Faith** begins with trust in God's promises.
- **Obedience** turns faith into action.
- **Grace** restores the fallen and strengthens the weary.
- **Courage** grows when we keep our eyes on the Lord.
- **Endurance** carries us to the finish.

This workbook is designed to help you see how God prepares His servants, and how He is preparing you. Each lesson includes clear biblical teaching, practical application, and reflection questions to help you take these truths from Scripture into daily life.

Let every page remind you that you are not unequipped or alone. The same Spirit who worked in these faithful men and women now works in you. God's plan for your life is not limited by your weakness but empowered by His strength.

*Now these things happened to them as examples, and they were written
for our instruction, on whom the ends of the ages have come.*

1 Corinthians 10:11 (CSB)

Matthew Allen

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How to Use This Workbook

This workbook is designed to help you grow in faith, character, and service as you study the lives of men and women God equipped for His work. Each lesson is structured to guide you through Scripture, reflection, and personal application. The goal is to become more like the God who shaped them.

1. Read the Lesson Carefully

Each lesson includes background information, teaching points, and biblical insights. Read thoughtfully. Take your time with the Scripture references and allow the message of God's Word to speak for itself before turning to the commentary.

2. Reflect on the Main Points

After reading, take a few moments to summarize what stands out to you. Each point is meant to highlight a key truth about faith, obedience, or endurance. Ask how these truths apply to your life, your church, and your daily walk with God.

3. Review the Key Verse

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Every lesson includes a memory verse that captures its central message. Read it aloud. Write it down. Pray over it. Hiding God's Word in your heart will help you carry these lessons beyond the classroom.

4. Engage with the Weekly Challenge

The weekly challenge gives you a way to live out what you've learned. These simple actions, serving, praying, reflecting, or encouraging, turn faith into practice. Growth happens when truth moves from the page to your life.

5. Use the Reflection Questions

Each lesson ends with discussion or reflection questions. Use them to deepen your study personally or as a group. They are written to prompt honest thought and conversation about how these biblical principles fit real life.

6. Pray as You Study

Ask God to shape your heart as He shaped the lives you are studying. Prayer invites transformation. Before and after each lesson, pause to thank Him for what He is teaching you and to ask for strength to obey.

7. Share What You Learn

Faith grows stronger when shared. Discuss these lessons with others in your congregation, family, or study group. Encourage one another to live as servants who are equipped for God's work.

A Final Word

God is still forming His people into instruments of His grace. As you walk through these pages, remember that you are part of the same story. The God who called Noah to build, David to lead, Mary to trust, and Paul to preach is calling you to serve today.

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.*

Ephesians 2:10 (CSB)

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PART ONE

God's Call to Serve

When God calls His people to serve, He always provides the strength and resources needed to fulfill that call. The December lessons will trace how God chose and equipped His servants in the Old Testament, revealing that His work has never depended on human ability but on divine power and faith.

We begin with Moses' encounter at the burning bush, where God assured him, "I will certainly be with you" (Exodus 3:12). From Moses' reluctant obedience to Joshua's courageous leadership, we see that God supplies what His servants lack. Gideon's story reminds us that the Lord uses weakness to display His strength, while young Samuel teaches us the importance of listening to God's voice and responding in faith. Each of these stories reveals that when God calls, He also equips—turning ordinary people into vessels of extraordinary purpose.

LESSON 1

The God Who Equips the Called

Exodus 3:1–12

Therefore, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you may lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” But Moses asked God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”
He answered, “I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I have sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain.

Exodus 3:10–12

Class Overview: Moses’ encounter at the burning bush shows that God never calls someone without also providing what they need to serve. When God chose Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, Moses protested his inadequacy. Yet God answered each fear with His presence and promise: “I will certainly be with you.” This lesson reminds us that God’s strength is always greater than our weakness. The same Lord who equipped Moses to confront Pharaoh equips His people today through His Word, His Spirit, and His faithful presence to do what He commands.

Class Objectives: By the end of this class, you should be able to—

1. Recognize that God’s calling always includes His equipping.
2. Understand the significance of Moses’ encounter with God in Exodus 3.
3. Identify the excuses Moses made and how God answered each one.
4. Explain how God’s presence empowers believers for service today.
5. Commit to trusting God’s ability more than personal ability when called to serve.

Introduction

WHEN EXODUS 3 BEGINS, Moses is an elderly man with calloused hands and a quiet life. For forty years, he has lived in the wilderness, far from Egypt's influence and suffering. Any dreams he once had of saving his people are gone. He has settled into obscurity, tending sheep that don't even belong to him. Yet it is here, in weakness, not strength, that God chooses to speak.

The burning bush scene is not about Moses' greatness but God, who interrupts an ordinary day to reveal His extraordinary purpose. The bush burns without being consumed, a sign of divine presence that cannot be diminished. Moses draws near, curious, and suddenly hears his name: "Moses, Moses." That moment changes everything.

Divine assignments often start where human confidence ends. Moses feels unqualified: "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?" (Exodus 3:11). But God's response is everything: "I will certainly be with you." God's presence, not human ability, is what equips His servants. The lesson is timeless. When God calls us to serve, He doesn't require perfection; He asks for trust. He provides the strength, wisdom, and courage we lack. God delights in using ordinary people who rely completely on Him. Every Christian is called to some form of service, and every calling comes with His promise: "I am with you always."

Historical Background

The events of Exodus 3 occur around the early 13th century B.C., long after Joseph's generation had died and Israel had multiplied into a large nation enslaved by Egypt. Pharaoh viewed the Hebrews as a threat to his empire and subjected them to cruel labor. The cries of God's people rose up to heaven, and the text says, "God heard their groaning ... and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exodus 2:24).

Moses was born into a time of oppression. Rescued from Pharaoh's order to kill Hebrew infants, he was raised in the royal palace but never lost sight of his identity. At forty, he killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave and fled to save his life. He then spent the next forty

years in Midian, marrying Zipporah, Jethro's daughter, and working as a shepherd. In Egypt, he was powerful; in Midian, he became humble. God was shaping him through obscurity and hardship so he would depend on Him alone.

Mount Horeb, also called Mount Sinai, was a rugged, desolate area. The "angel of the Lord" appearing in the burning bush is identified as God Himself speaking from the flame. This theophany revealed God's holiness ("Remove your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground"), His compassion ("I have seen the suffering of My people"), and His purpose ("I am sending you to Pharaoh"). The name "I AM WHO I AM" (Yahweh) revealed the eternal, self-existent nature of God—the One who was, is, and always will be.

The meeting at Horeb transformed a wandering shepherd into God's chosen leader. What seemed like failure and exile had been preparation. Through His presence, promises, and power, God was equipping Moses to accomplish what human strength alone never could.

God Calls Ordinary People in Ordinary Moments

Exodus 3 begins with Moses doing the same thing he had done every day for forty years: tending sheep in the wilderness. It was routine work, far from the Egyptian royal court. But that's exactly where God met him. The scene couldn't have been more ordinary: a shepherd, a desert, a flock. Yet the moment was extraordinary because God chose to speak. The burning bush burned without being consumed. When Moses turned aside to look, God called his name twice, "Moses, Moses." The call was personal and direct. God didn't wait for Moses to be in a temple or prayer meeting; He met him at work.

Moses' situation teaches us a lot about how God works. By this time in his life, Moses was around eighty years old and living as a foreigner. His dreams of leading Israel had faded many years earlier. He didn't even own the sheep he was watching; they belonged to his father-in-law. Still, none of that mattered to God. The Lord doesn't seek prestige, youth, or strength. He looks for hearts that are willing to listen. God often calls

people when they feel their best years are behind them. He finds them in ordinary situations and redirects their focus toward His purpose.

This pattern repeats throughout Scripture. Gideon was threshing wheat when God called him a “valiant warrior.” Samuel was asleep when he first heard God’s voice. David was tending his father’s sheep when Samuel anointed him king. Amos was caring for sycamore trees when the Lord sent him to prophesy. The disciples were fishing or collecting taxes when Jesus said, “Follow Me.” Mary was living quietly in Nazareth when she learned she would bear the Son of God. Time and again, God calls people in the middle of ordinary life.

The theology here is simple but powerful. *God’s calling is based on His choice, not our qualifications.* God often calls after periods of failure or waiting because those are times when pride has diminished and faith can grow. The first step of obedience is paying attention. We have to turn to see what God is doing and say, “Here I am.”

Many of us resist God’s call for the same reasons Moses did. We think we’re too old, too busy, or too unqualified. We assume our routine is too mundane for God to use. But the story of Moses reminds us that God shapes servants in quiet places long before He sends them to great ones. He trains hearts through everyday faithfulness. That means every job, every errand, every unnoticed act of service can be a training ground for divine work.

We need to live with open eyes and hearts. Treat your daily path as potential sacred ground. Invite God into the routines of your week: the commute, the conversations, the chores. Small acts of attention can open doors for extraordinary acts of faith. God is still calling ordinary people in ordinary moments. The question is whether we will stop, turn aside, and say, “Here I am.”

God Reveals His Presence Before He Gives the Mission

Before Moses ever received a command, he received a revelation. God’s first words to him were not about Pharaoh or Israel; they were about holiness. As Moses approached the burning bush, a voice called out, “Do

not come closer. Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5). Note how God revealed who He is before explaining what He wanted Moses to do. *Service always begins with reverence.* Before we can represent God, we must recognize His holiness and authority.

While the burning bush served as a visual wonder, it was a lesson about God’s nature. The bush burned but was not consumed, symbolizing God’s power that never fades and His purity that cannot be diminished. The same fire that later descended on Sinai and filled the tabernacle was first seen here in miniature. It reminded Moses that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was alive, eternal, and unchanging. The fire that drew Moses’ attention would become the same presence that guided Israel through the wilderness by pillar of fire and cloud.

Moses needed this encounter before he could ever stand before Pharaoh. The task ahead was enormous, but God grounded Moses’ courage in His character. When Moses asked, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” (Exodus 3:11), God did not boost Moses’ confidence or list his qualifications. Instead, He gave the only answer that mattered: “I will certainly be with you” (v. 12). The power to serve did not come from Moses’ abilities but from God’s abiding presence.

This truth runs throughout all of Scripture. When Joshua took over from Moses, God said, “I will be with you, just as I was with Moses” (Joshua 1:5). When Gideon was afraid of his task, the Lord said, “I will be with you” (Judges 6:16). When Jesus sent out His disciples to make disciples of all nations, He promised, “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). God’s servants find their courage not from what they can do, but from who is with them.

Our culture often encourages us to look inward for strength, but Scripture directs us to look upward. God’s presence is the foundation of faith and the power behind every mission. When we begin with worship, we remember that service flows from relationship. We are not doing God’s work for Him; *we are doing His work with Him*, and reverence grounds obedience. If we forget God’s holiness, our service can become

mechanical or self-centered. But when we remember who He is, even the hardest tasks can become opportunities for His glory to shine.

We need to slow down before serving. God cares more about shaping our hearts than filling our schedules. He wants His people to realize that true effectiveness comes from communion with Him, not from human effort. Before we speak for God, we must stand before Him. Before we go, we must worship. And when we do, we learn what Moses discovered that day at the bush: God's presence is enough.

God's Power Overcomes Human Weakness

When Moses heard God's call, his first instinct was to resist. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?" he asked (Exodus 3:11). Those words reveal a man deeply aware of his inadequacy. Moses understood the weight of failure. He had fled Egypt decades earlier, a fugitive and a disappointment to his people. His confidence was gone. In human terms, he was the least likely candidate to confront Pharaoh, the world's most powerful man. But God wasn't looking for a hero: He was looking for a vessel.

God's response to Moses' fear was simple: "I will certainly be with you." That promise shifts the focus from the servant's weakness to the Sender's strength. God never denied Moses' shortcomings. Instead, He filled the gaps with His own power. Moses' sense of inadequacy became the very reason God could use him. A proud, self-reliant man might have tried to lead by force; a humbled man would learn to depend completely on God. Weakness, in God's hands, becomes a tool for His glory.

Later in their conversation, Moses raised more objections: he feared the people's doubts, his lack of eloquence, and his inability to persuade. Each time, God responded by revealing more of Himself. When Moses said, "They will ask me, 'What is His name?'" God replied, "I AM WHO I AM." Those words affirm the eternal, self-existent nature of God. He is not defined by time, place, or power. His name means "the One who is." The success of the mission would depend entirely on who God is, not on who Moses was.

In Scripture, God consistently chooses the weak to show His strength. He used a shepherd boy to defeat a giant, a reluctant prophet to confront a king, a teenage girl to bear the Messiah, and untrained fishermen to turn the world upside down. Paul said, “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness’” (2 Corinthians 12:9). God doesn’t remove our frailty; He works through it.

Many Christians today hesitate to serve because they feel unqualified. We worry that we don’t know enough, speak well enough, or lead confidently enough. But those excuses resemble Moses’ words at the bush. God still responds the same way: “I will be with you.” He equips us through His Word, His Spirit, and His people. He provides what we lack when we trust Him enough to step forward. Our weakness becomes the stage on which His strength is displayed.

We need to shift our confidence from ourselves to the Savior. God’s work has never relied on human ability; it depends on His power working through surrendered hearts. Moses went from being a fearful man hiding in the desert to a bold leader confronting Pharaoh—not because he found hidden courage, but because he learned to depend on God’s strength. The same God who transformed Moses is working in us. When we feel the least capable, we’re often closest to being useful. God’s grace fills every gap created by our weakness.

Lesson Summary and Reflection

Moses’ call at the burning bush reminds us that God always prepares before sending. God meets people in everyday moments, reveals His presence before giving a task, and provides His strength to overcome weakness. What started as an ordinary day for Moses became a defining moment because he paused to listen. The same God who spoke from the bush still calls His people today, often when life feels routine or when we feel most unqualified.

When God revealed Himself to Moses, He emphasized holiness, compassion, and presence. He reminded Moses that His plan was not dependent on human strength or skill. The call to serve always begins with knowing who God is. Before Moses could stand before Pharaoh,

he had to bow before the Lord. That order never changes. True service grows out of worship. God wants servants who depend on Him, not themselves.

Each objection Moses raised: his fear, his lack of eloquence, his sense of failure, was answered by one truth: “I will certainly be with you.” Those words remain the heart of every calling. God’s presence is our greatest support. It helps us overcome fear, doubt, and hard times. When we realize this, we stop judging our ability and start trusting Him.

Divine work does not require extraordinary talent but a willing heart. God uses ordinary people, shepherds, laborers, parents, teachers, and retirees to accomplish His purpose. He equips them through His Word, His Spirit, and His providence. Like Moses, we must learn to listen, trust, and obey even when the journey seems challenging. God takes pleasure in demonstrating His power through humble servants who are ready to say, “Here I am.”

Key Truths

- God calls ordinary people amid ordinary life.
- Every calling begins with recognizing God’s presence and holiness.
- God’s strength always exceeds human weakness.
- The promise of “I will be with you” is the foundation for faithful service.
- True service grows out of reverence, dependence, and trust in God’s sufficiency.

Conclusion

Divine work is never about our ability; it is about His presence. He doesn’t choose the strongest or the most gifted; He chooses those who will listen and obey. The lesson of the burning bush is not confined to a mountain in Midian; it is meant for us. The ground beneath our feet becomes holy when we recognize that God is present and active in our lives.

When God calls you to serve, don’t focus on your inadequacy. Remember who is sending you. The “I AM” who empowered Moses still

equips His people today. His promise remains the same: “I will certainly be with you.” Trust that, and step forward in faith.

Memory Verse and Weekly Challenge

He answered, ‘I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I have sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain.’”

Exodus 3:12 (CSB)

God’s assurance to Moses— “I will certainly be with you”—is the foundation of every calling. The same promise belongs to every believer who steps forward to serve in faith.

Weekly Challenge

1. Reflect on Your Own “Burning Bush” Moments.

Think about times when God may have been calling you to act, serve, or speak. Were you too busy, afraid, or uncertain to respond? This week, slow down and make space to listen.

2. Serve in One Simple Way.

Look for one opportunity to serve someone in your daily routine—a word of encouragement, a visit, a prayer, or a helping hand. Let your ordinary moment become a place of holy service.

3. Pray for Awareness.

Each morning, ask God to help you notice His presence in small things. Pray, “Lord, help me turn aside and see You today.”

4. Write Down Your Excuses.

Like Moses, we all have reasons to resist. List your main excuses, then write next to each one the words: “*God is with me.*”

5. Share a Testimony.

Before next class, tell someone how God is working in your life. It could be a story of how you served this week or how you sensed His presence in a moment of weakness.

For Discussion

1. When you think about Moses' story, which part feels most like your own—being overlooked, feeling unqualified, or learning to trust God's presence?

2. How does the truth that *God reveals Himself before He sends us* change your view of service and ministry?

3. What are some ordinary places in your life where you could begin to see “holy ground”?

4. Why do you think God often calls people after long seasons of waiting or failure?

5. How can remembering “I will certainly be with you” strengthen your courage to obey God's call this week?
