I. INTRODUCTION

A. ILLUSTRATION

1. Which friend, if they called, would you drop everything to help?
2. December 1938 - Nicholas Winton received that kind of call from his friend Martin Blake from Prague.
3. Nicholas was a 29-year-old stockbroker success story.
4. Nicholas was on his way to Switzerland for a skiing trip. Blake told him to come to Prague to see the crisis among the Jewish children of that nation.
5. Then, Czechoslovakia was in Crisis because of Nazi Germany. Forget skiing, come!
6. Nicholas went - What he saw changed the course of his life.

B. MAIN THEME

1. **Today, I want to talk about how fast your life can change when the Lord taps your shoulder and says Come and see what I have in store for you.**
2. Come perform my wonders.
3. **The question is, what would you do?**
4. Find me in Exodus 3: one of my favorite stories - Moses and the burning bush.

C. PRAYER

1. Heavenly Father, we come to you today with itching ears ready to listen for your voice calling out to all in unforeseen ways. I pray that you help us to better appreciate just who you are by better understanding your call to Moses. May this story be more than a history lesson; may it be a wake-up call to those of us who are blind to God around us. As always, may the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. You are our Rock. You are our Redeemer. Get glory in this place.

D. NEW SERIES

1. **Exodus 3:1-12**
2. New series today - formed between the mountains.
3. Mts. continue to be a theme for us - we approached, we paused on one; now we are following the journey of Moses from Mt. Sinai to Mt. Nebo.
4. See how they are formed in between these mountaintop moments.

E. TODAY

1. We, like the Israelites, are formed by the God who waits, the God who knows, and the God who sends. Let's start with the God who waits.

II. THE GOD WHO WAITS

A. TEXT - READ EXODUS 3:1-6

B. ILLUSTRATION

1. Nicholas could have gone skiing. Continued the plans he had. Czeck not his problem. But he sensed this was unique, different, worthy of his notice.
2. Something similar happens with Moses here in our story today.
3. Moses isn't looking for God, or meaning, or purpose, or something new.
4. But then something catches his attention - remarkable - different. A shrub
   a) Burning, burning and burning, but not burning up.
   b) Vs. 3 - I must go over and look at this remarkable sight.
   c) Here are a few reasons this is remarkable.

C. INTERPRET TO APPLY

1. **God is waiting for Moses to notice him.**
   a) Best news of the sermon - God waiting on Moses to notice him. No fireworks, just waited.
   b) How many times has God had to wait on you to notice him?
   c) Erica tells me our sons get their observation skills from me.
   d) I'm a one-track-mind kind of person - narrow focus - any others out there?
   e) So it's good news for us that God waits, and that God gets our attention.
2. **God gets our attention in unique ways**
   a) Usual ways - sermons, prayer, scripture, songs, etc.
   b) Here he uses something that takes time. A one-time glance wasn't enough.
   c) He knows how to get our attention through the ordinary...
      (1) When we can't stop thinking about - a burden you can't shake - an opportunity you didn't expect - a door you wanted opened, God closed - pain - a burning bush that doesn't go away.
      (2) The ordinary becomes extraordinary when it doesn't go away...
      (3) Then Jesus shows up... Did you see him?
3. **The angel of the Lord = Jesus**
   a) Angel of the Lord reveals God in OT | Scholars believe this is actually God, the preincarnate Jesus | ground was already holy | how bout for us?

D. TAKEAWAY

1. Formation begins when we behold God's presence.
2. **First takeaway - BEHOLD God's PRESENCE**
3. Moses sees something awe-inspiring; he took time to notice.
4. We may never see a burning bush, but we see God's wonders around us.
5. Childbirth, money arrives at precisely the right time and just the right amount.
6. Miracles of healing doctors can't explain.
7. Transformation stories because of the gospel.
8. Formation begins when we behold God's presence.

E. **TRANSITION** - But the story only gets more powerful from here. Because this isn't just a God who waits on us. He is a God who knows us. Look with me to verse 7.

III. THE GOD WHO KNOWS

A. TEXT - READ EXODUS 3:7-8

B. ILLUSTRATION

1. Nicholas Winton went to Prague- he saw more than a refugee crisis; he saw people.
2. By the end of 1938, thousands of refugees poured into what was left of Czech
3. Nicholas saw them. He saw families living with uncertainty. Parents desperate to save children. Children whose futures were in question. This was no longer a story on the radio or in the papers.
4. This was personal.
5. Difference between knowing about suffering and knowing people suffering.
6. Knowing that suffering exists is different from sitting across the table from someone who is suffering.
   a) It's different when suffering has a name, a face, and a story.
7. Winton went to Czech knowing there was a refugee crisis; he left knowing refugees. That's a difference that matters.

C. INTERPRETATION

1. Four verbs of God in this passage.
   a) God Saw, heard, knows, (Then says) God came down.
2. The word for know in Hebrew is YADA - experiential knowledge.
   a) Their suffering mattered to him - he understood their pain. Experienced suffering with them.
   b) God's heart feels people's pain.

D. APPLICATION

1. Experiences occur through our senses...
   a) If we want God's heart, we need to see with God's eyes.
   b) Listen with God's ears, and embrace with God's love.
   c) It's difficult to bear someone's burden while keeping them at arm's length.
   d) Get close enough for suffering to have a name, a face.
2. If we want the heart of God, we need the eyes of God, the arms of God, the feet of God, and the hands of God.

E. TAKEAWAY

1. So when we see what God sees. When we know what God knows, our bodies become the delivery methods for God's mercy. Here's the takeaway
2. Formation occurs in our experiences when we **BEAR God's MERCY.**
3. When you do, you become a light to others in darkness. Like Nicholas Winton.

F. **TRANSITION** - When we have the heart of God and bear his mercy, we shouldn't be surprised when God's next words are:

1. Now, go. I am sending you. Follow along in verse 9.

IV. THE GOD WHO SENDS

A. TEXT - EXODUS 3:9-12

B. INTERPRETATION

1. DID YOU CATCH GOD'S GAMEPLAN?
   a) Vs. 8 - I've come down to deliver my people -
   b) Vs. 9 - Now I'm sending you. Uhhh...?
   c) Which is Moses' response: Lord, who am I? Ever use those words before?
   d) Who am I that I should speak in great halls before Pharaoh? Who am I?
   e) I'm a nobody... And that's the point.
   f) Then God gives the five most important words of this story...
2. I WILL BE WITH YOU.
   a) That's how God's mission works. God sees, moves, then sends.
   b) Sometimes you are the answer to the prayer you're asking God to answer
      (1) God, someone needs help... okay, how about you?
      (2) God, this group needs money... Okay, how about you?
      (3) God, help this person find you... okay, how about you?
   c) Moses grew up a prince of Egypt, but spent the last 40 years as a shepherd. There is considerable self-doubt in Moses here. **Us Too?**
      (1) God uses farmers, shepherds, people of no power or importance...
      (2) When God is with you, there is no limit to what you can do for him.
      (3) God loves to use small, powerless people because then there is no mistake about where the power, authority, and ability came from.

C. ILLUSTRATION

1. You could say, Nicholas Winton turned aside; he noticed God; he experienced the crisis... someone had to do something.
2. He had no real power or authority. Just a 29-year-old broker.
3. Every child needed somewhere to go.
4. Find British families to take them in.
   a) He took photographs to families,
   b) Raised mony
   c) Worked through immigration paperwork
   d) Covered the 50 euro expense for each child.
5. Here's the best part
   a) Still did his day job.
   b) First group left Prague by plane on March 14, 1939. Then came the trains.
   c) 8 major movements of children between March and August of that year.

D. TAKEAWAY

1. Here's the takeaway.. formed when we are sent to **BE God's LOVE**.
2. Because somewhere beyond this mountain, there may be someone crying out, and you may be the one God is sending.

E. TRANSITION

1. And it may be small, or it might be great. Chances are you will never know how far your love reaches after you give it.

V. CLOSING

A. ILLUSTRATION

1. For much of Nicholas's life, no one knew what he accomplished. There weren't any news articles or press releases or primetime specials in his honor.
2. Life simply went on.
3. He married, raised a family, and continued his career.
4. The children's story largely disappeared.
5. Then nearly 50 years later, in 1988, Nicholas's wife, Grete, discovered an old scrapbook in their home. Inside were photographs, names, letters, documents, records of the children Nicholas and others had worked to bring out of Czechoslovakia before the war.
6. His wife takes the scrapbook, and it finds its way to the producers of a BBC television program called *THAT's LIFE!*
7. He received a special ticket to sit in the audience.
8. But he didn't know what was about to happen.
9. The host shows the audience the scrapbook... and then something awe-inspiring occurs.
10. **Let's watch the video.**

11. Nearly 50 years later, those children grew up, built lives, families of their own, alive in part because of his efforts to save them from the Nazis.
12. All in all, they rescued 669 children, mostly Jewish children.
13. And it started because Nicholas turned aside to notice.

14. Moses had no idea where that burning bush would lead when he turned aside to look.
15. Winton had no idea where that trip to Prague would lead when he changed his plans and went.
16. And you may have no idea what God will do when you simply become available to him...

B. PUNCHLINE

1. We are formed by God's call when
   a) his presence captures our attention,
   b) his mercy captures our hearts,
   c) and his mission captures our lives.
2. **Be willing to be captured by God.**
3. **When we do, God will use us in powerful ways.**

C. PRAYER - Gracious Father above, we come to you now asking for your Spirit to give us words to speak, to give us direction for our feet, and to give us strength in

our inner selves to do the work of your Kingdom. I pray we let ourselves be captured by your presence, your mercy, and your mission. Let us be the light you've called us to be. But most of all, I pray that we stop, slow down, and turn aside. The hurry of our flesh distracts the call laid on our hearts. Moses slowed down; he noticed, and then he was captured, enraptured, amazed, and wondered at God's presence.

D. Ask these things in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, the King. Amen.

FamFest - Sept. 20, 5-7:30 pm. We will have inflatables for kids, face painting, youth games, BINGO, a cornhole tournament, and a pig roast dinner will be served!

Sign-ups are at the back for helping with all the kids' events.

We also have a sign-up for pulling pork at the Claar's farm on US 40.

BINGO Prizes - We need prizes for our BINGO game at the FamFest on September 20. If you are willing to bring a dessert, snack, candy, homemade bread, jam, etc., please sign up at the information center. Thank you!

Women's Ministry Fall Outing - All ladies are invited to an evening of flowers, food and fellowship. We will meet at Jones Farm in Milton at 6 pm on Thursday, Sept. 24 to pick and arrange a flower bouquet to take home. We will then go to Chicao's Pizza in Cambridge City. The total cost is $20. Jenny Clark is collecting the money (if a check, make payable to NLCC). Bring a mason jar or equivalent-size vase for your flowers. Please sign up at the information center. See Kierra Bogue with questions.

Training Meetings - Security Team, 9/20 after service. Lobby Hosts, 9/27 after service.

Children's Ministries Meeting - There will be a meeting for all children's church leaders/helpers and children's StudyGroup teachers will meet on September 13 after service in the worship center. See Alyssa Elmore with questions.