

Harris Creek Baptist Church
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Moses and the Burning Bush

Exodus 2:11 – 3:12

“One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, “Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?” The man said, “Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and thought, “What I did must have become known.” When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well. Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the troughs to water their father’s flock. Some shepherds came along and drove them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue and watered their flock. When the girls returned to Reuel their father, he asked them, “Why have you returned so early today?” They answered, “An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock.” “And where is he?” Reuel asked his daughters. “Why did you leave him? Invite him to have something to eat.” Moses agreed to stay with the man, who gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage. Zipporah gave birth to a son, and Moses named him Gershom, saying, “I have become a foreigner in a foreign land.” During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.” When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.”

“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have

heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.””

Good morning Harris Creek! How are we doing? Good morning! Well, I love sports! I love playing any sport, anytime, anywhere, with anyone. I will take you on in basketball. I will play you in golf. I will play you in cornhole. I will play you in anything, anytime, anywhere. One of the things that I love about sports is the competition of sports. I love to win! I absolutely hate to lose. So, whenever I am playing with someone I am just trying to win.

So, a week and a half ago, I was introduced to a brand-new sport. The sport of fishing. Now some of you are like, “Nate, that is not a sport.” I am like, all I know is you can win, and you can lose in fishing – that is a sport to me. So, I had never spent much time – ever - fishing. But my college friends and I, we try to get together about once a year with our wives and get together to reconnect. So, we got a rental house in Orange Beach, Alabama. And this house had this dock that went out to a bay that connected to the gulf. I think we have a picture of it – it is a gorgeous spot. So, every single morning and evening, we would go out and we would fish. The house had fishing rods and apparently that is about the best time to fish – in the morning and the evening.

So, we would go off the dock and we would try to catch fish. Hour upon hour upon hour; day after day after day; we were trying to see who could catch the biggest fish. And after all that time, the biggest fish that we caught was about... (arms start large and then come completely together) this big. We did not catch anything after all that time! Day after day after day, hour upon hour, cast after cast – we caught nothing! It was so frustrating – it felt like we wasted our time. We happened to rent the one house on the gulf coast that had no fish at it – it was ridiculous.

On the last morning we were there, we did not even try to go fishing. Because there were no fish there, so we were just sitting out on the back patio – just enjoying our time. We were drinking coffee and eating our breakfast; just admiring the view. Until a boat pulled up, it was one of those fishing guide boats. It was not huge, but it was a small boat that had a handful of people. It was a fishing guide that pulled up and went right next to our dock – right where we had been fishing.

So, we are looking at each other laughing going, “That is the worst guide in all of the gulf coast. These people paid him to take them fishing and he took them to the one place where there are no fish!” We are just having the grandest time watching them while we are eating our breakfast. We

actually felt bad for them though. Because not only did they take them to a place where there were no fish, but there was a 12-year-old on the boat. We thought, “Man, this is probably his first time ever fishing. His dad wanted to go out and catch fish with him and this kid is never going to want to fish again – because there are no fish here.”

So, we are eating breakfast, watching them, and I am specifically watching this 12-year-old. After he threw/cast – whatever he did with his rod – he was throwing his lure out there. And after two or three of those, all of the sudden he starts pulling on something; he is reeling it in. And it is like, “Man that is hilarious! We pulled up weeds too.” Like I am so bummed for this kid who is not going to get anything. He is reeling it in; reeling it in; reeling it in and all of the sudden this fish pops up. And y’all, I about choked on my cheerios.

The fact that this 12-year-old caught this fish – it was a great looking fish! I do not know if it was some salmon, or a tilapia, or a mahi mahi. The only fish I know are the fish that I eat. All I know is that he caught this fish, and I did not. This 12-year-old punk caught something, and I could not catch anything! And y’all, I am embarrassed because I am a grown man, I am a grown man and I got mopey. That whole morning, I was like, “Fishing stinks! Who would want to fish? You waste your time, and you catch them and then you throw it back. And I am not any good at it. I am a failure as a fisherman. This kid, this 12-year-old kid could catch fish and I could not catch fish.” I put my rod away and I was done because I felt like a failure. I gave up because I felt like I had failed.

Now I do not think I am the only person in this room who has given up on something in their life because they felt like a failure. Maybe you did not fail once like I did. Maybe it is something you failed in year after year after year; and you are just done because you feel like you failed. And I think God’s message to you this morning is that you gave up too soon because He is not done. He is not done working on you. It does not matter if it has been year after year after year, He is not done with you. So, stop believing the lies like, “I am always going to struggle with lust. I am always going to fall into this temptation. I am always going to be a failure in this area. Or I am always going to have a bad relationship with my dad. This is just how it is, every single time I reach out to him old hurts are brought up. And this is just how it is going to be.” Maybe for you, you have started believing things like, “I am always going to be out of shape. I am always going to be bad with my finances. I am never going to be a good enough wife. I am never going to be a good enough dad. I am never going to be a good enough worker.” Or in your relationship with Jesus, “I am never going to enjoy reading Scripture. I am never going to understand it.”

Whatever it is for you, we all have one of those areas, where we have started to believe this soundtrack in our life that we are not good enough and this is just who we are. I had another experience this week, it was not with fishing, it was something else. JP asked me on a scale of 1-10 if I was saved. I was like, “Man, I think I am saved.” I am just kidding! He did not ask me that question, he knows that I am saved. But he did ask me another 1-10 question. He asked me to rate my prayer life on a scale of 1-10. He loves those questions! And I was thinking about that, and I was like, “Man, I think I am a 6.” And I was discouraged, because I do not really create much time or space in my life to pray. To pray for myself or the needs of the body or whatever – I just do not really do it. In fact, I am probably worse than a 6. And I got discouraged. Because I am not just a 6 in this season, but I think I was a 6 in the season before, and the season before,

and the season before. And I left that thinking, man I am just not very good at prayer – I think this is who I am. I just feel like a failure. But I think God wants to tell us this morning, that He wants to do something new. That just because that is where you have been does not mean that is where you will always be. You do not have to be stuck there. Do not give up on it, because He is not done with you yet.

And we are going to see that this morning through the story of Moses and the burning bush. If you have your Bibles, open up to Exodus 2. We are going to start reading in verse 11. We are in a brand-new series here at Harris Creek called BC. We are looking at some of the most famous stories in the Old Testament, before Christ was physically present on earth. But we also want to communicate clearly that there really is no such thing as BC. There is no such thing as Before Christ, because in John 1 it says that Jesus was alive from the beginning of the beginning of the beginning. He just was not physically present here on earth necessarily, but He was overseeing it all. He was intimately involved in it all. And we can see His fingerprints through all of it. So, while we look at these before Christ stories, we can still learn how to live with Christ now. Because He is active in these stories! And in this story specifically!

We are going to be looking at the story of Moses and the Burning Bush. Now at this point in Moses' life the dude was just bummed out. He felt like a failure, as we are about to see. He felt like a foreigner, he felt like he was too far gone, he is just mopey. I like to call him Mopey Moses. In this season he is just a mopey guy – Mopey Moses. And as I was researching this week, I was just researching commentaries and seeing what biblical scholars had to say on this topic. They are trying to recreate what Moses looked like – so we could better understand who Moses was and what he looked like. So, for your perspective this morning – biblical scholars have tried to recreate what we think Moses looked like at this time and this is what he looked like (Nate shows picture of Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh). Y'all, we are going to read this, and you are just going to hear Eeyore. This is what he sounds like! He is like, "Many I am just not good enough. I do not speak veery well. I am a foreigner. I will always be..." That is just who he is in this season. He is bummed out; he is mopey; he is an Eeyore. But here is what God wants to do. He wants to pick him up and draw him out and say, "I have got something better for you!"

We are going to see God deliver him from defeat. That is really the subject of today's message. How God delivers His people from defeat. As we pick up on Moses' story in chapter 2, verse 11 of Exodus – some of you might know who Moses is, some of you might have no idea. So, for some quick context, Moses was born into Egypt as a Hebrew. He was a Jewish person and at that time the Hebrews were enslaved to the Egyptians. To make matters worse, Pharaoh – the king of Egypt at that time – had declared that every single newborn baby boy, to the Hebrews, was to be put to death. Because they were growing at such a number that would eventually outnumber the Egyptians. So, Moses' mother gives birth to Moses, but does not kill him. Instead, courageously takes care of him. She hides him, nurtures him, until she could no longer – I believe it was about after three months – and she figures she could not hide him anymore. So, she put him in a basket, strategically in a basket in the Nile River, and pushed him off. How hard would that be? But it says that Moses floated down in this basket. Pharaoh's daughter happened to be down there as well. She picked him up out of the basket and Moses was raised in royalty all throughout his life.

Years and years go by as he was raised in royalty, and this is what we see next in his story. Chapter 2, verse 11 – it says this, **“One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.”** Big mistake – clearly a big mistake! **“The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, “Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?” The man said, “Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and thought, “What I did must have become known.” When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well.”**

So, Moses has made a mistake, he has made a huge mistake. He has murdered an Egyptian who was abusing a Hebrew. He has made a huge mistake and Pharaoh has found out about it. So, he runs! He flees in his failure. And it is not a short journey. In fact, it was about a 300-mile journey – I think we have a map of it behind me. He left from Egypt to Midian. Now 300-miles, that is about the distance between Waco and Lubbock. That is about the distance he traveled. And we think that is not that big of a deal – you could get to Lubbock by the end of the day. But in that time, in ancient time, you did not leave the area where you grew up. That is where you were. In fact, this journey would have been almost unheard of because he went 300-miles which would have been about a month’s journey. And he ran and ran and ran because he thought his failure would stick with him forever.

1. Moses Thought His Failure Was Final

Moses felt like his failure was final in his life. Because you see, it makes sense that he fled. It makes sense that he ran away from Pharaoh because he was in danger. But what happened to him while he fled is Moses changed. Moses changed from a courageous member of royalty to a fleeing foreigner. His mindset shifted and he began to think that this is just who I am. My failure is going to stick with me forever.

In fact, we can get a glimpse into his mindset with what comes next in this passage. This is what it says in verse 21, right after Moses sat down by the well there were women that came up trying to get some water. There were also these band of raiders who came up trying to hurt these women. So, Moses got up and fought for these women and drove these raiders off. So, these women took Moses in. They brought him home to meet their father and this is what we see next in verse 21, **“Moses agreed to stay with the man, – their father - who gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage. Zipporah gave birth to a son, and Moses named him Gershom, saying, “I have become a foreigner in a foreign land.” During that long period, the king of Egypt died.”**

These verses are important because they give us a glimpse into Moses’ mindset in this time in his life. They show us what he is thinking, what he is feeling. They show us what is going on in his heart. First, we see that he says, “I am a foreigner in a foreign land.” He is saying this is who I am in this season. Because of my failure it has driven me out to the desert, and this is who I am in this season. But he is not just saying that. His failure to him was much more final than that. He

is not just saying, “This is who I am in this season.” He is saying, “This is who I will forever be and so will my kid.” Because he has a son – what a reason to rejoice! He gives birth to a baby, and he names him Gershom. Which not only is that just a brutal name – like “Bro, good luck at the 6th grade lunch table Gershom. You will develop a spine of steel because that thing is going to be tough.” Not only is it a brutal name, in your notes in your Bible it might tell you what that name means. Because that name, Gershom, it means I am a foreigner. You see what Moses is doing? He is passing down his mindset of defeatism and failure and he is passing it down to his kids. He is saying, “Not only will I forever be a failure. Not only will I be a foreigner, but so will my kid. My failure is final, and we are stuck here for generation after generation because of what I have done.” He is passing on his mindset to his kid.

Now parents, you have got to hear this. This is what you do every single day. Your kids are picking up on theology every single time you talk around the dinner table. They are picking up on your mindset. It might not be in the name that you gave to your kid, but it is in the words that you speak around your house every single day. You are teaching them theology. You are teaching them what you think about God. And are you teaching them what Moses believed that every single failure was final; that there is no hope for change? Are they hearing you say things like, “Man that is just who my boss is – he is always blowing it. He is always falling short. He is always frustrating.” Or are they hearing you say things like, “That is just who Aunt Sherry is – she is just kind of the crazy one in the family. We just got to get used to her because that is just who she is.” Or are you even saying things to them like, “Are you ever going to be kind to you sister? I am not even sure you have the capacity to be kind to her.” Is that what they hear? Are you passing on the same mentality of Moses that God cannot change things because failure is final? We are stuck in our sins; we are stuck in our failures.

Or are you passing on a legacy of hope. A legacy of faith. Are they hearing you say things like, “Man I know Aunt Sherry has got some stuff going on but let us pray for her right now. Let us ask God to move.” Or “I know you are struggling being kind to your sister, let us just pray for it right now. I know you want to be better, let us ask God to change your heart.” Is that the legacy you are leaving? Are you leaving behind a legacy of faith that God can change things or that failure is final? You are passing something down, just like Moses. You are passing a mentality and a theology down to your kids. And it is not just parents. What are you passing along to your friends? What are you passing along to your co-workers? What are you passing on to your Life Group? You are passing along theology every single time you speak. What are they hearing from you?

And while Moses left a mopey mentality, he also left a weak mentality. Because the other thing I want to point out in this passage is what happens in verse 23. Because while Moses used to be a courageous member of royalty, like he was trying to fight back. In fact, he fought so hard that he murdered someone. He was a fighter! In this fleeing and in this failure he changed entirely. Because verse 23 of this passage says this – he has changed – it says, “**During that long period, the king of Egypt died.**” So, this means that since Pharaoh was dead, the danger was gone. Since Pharaoh was dead, Moses could go back home. But what does he do? He stays put. He just stays where he is at in Midian because this is where he is going to be the rest of his life. He is not fighting to go home. He does not have a hope to go home. He is just used to being lost. Scriptures says that he stays there for 40 years. And he does not just stay there, he begins to live

into the culture of that area. Because as we see later in chapter 4, God became angry with Moses because he did not even circumcise Gershom. At this time Moses was not even trying to follow God because he was already too far gone. He was already too lost. His failure was already final, so why try anymore?

I think some of us are right there this morning. You have got this sin; you have got this struggle and you are not even fighting back anymore. You are not hoping for healing. You have just realized that you are stuck with it. So, whenever it pops up in your life, there is no confession of it. There is no repentance of it. There is just acceptance of it. Because it feels permanent. It feels like this is permanent a part of who you are, and this is how Moses felt. He felt like he was permanently a failure and a foreigner. But friend, listen to this. There is nothing permanent for God! No one is permanently lost. No one is permanently broken. No one is permanently scarred. God can change things! He can change you and he can change your situation.

This is what we see him do next in this chapter. He does not leave Moses to sit and wallow in his failure. God changes things. We see it happen in chapter 3, verse 1 – God appears to Moses in a burning bush, and He tells us who He is. I am going to read a good amount of Scripture. I am going to read about nine verses here, so lock in with me! These are important verse as God tells us what He has seen and who He is. Chapter 3, verse 1, in Exodus – **“Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.” When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.” “Do not come any closer,” God said. ‘Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.’”** Man, I love this! God is already changing things. He is changing foreign ground to holy ground.

Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land...” Skipping ahead to verse 10, **“So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”**

So, while Moses was tending to his flock, like he was doing every single day for the last 40 years, God appears to Him. And He says, “I am going to do something new.” And this passage is all about God telling us who He is. And He uses three active verbs in this paragraph. He says, “I have seen their misery. I have heard their prayers.” The ESV says, “I have known their suffering.” What God is saying is I am intimately involved in their pain. I have seen it, I have heard it, and I have known it. And I am not just an inept God. I am not a God that is too far off. I am a God who wants action. I am a God who wants to invade this situation and draw them up out of their slavery, up out of their danger and place them on a brand-new path toward freedom. This is who I am as God. I am a God who will fight for your freedom.

2. *God Fights for our Freedom.*

This is who our God is and that is what He is trying to tell us in this passage. Because while many of the Israelites at this time, no doubt, thought they would forever be stuck in slavery. They are thinking, “Man I am stuck in slavery. My dad was in slavery. My dad’s dad before him was in slavery.” And we just heard Moses say, “I will forever be a foreigner and I think my kid will forever be a foreigner.” These things felt final. But God appears and He says, “Hold up! I am not done. I am going to do something new.”

How many of us need to hear that this morning? You walked in here thinking, ‘I am stuck in this sin. I am stuck in this habit. I am stuck in this broken relationship.’ Maybe you did not even walk in thinking about it, maybe you have just gotten so used to that you have accepted it. You have accepted that part of your life. But God is here this morning saying, “I want to do something new. I am not done.” Because we have a God who will always, always, always fight for our freedom! This is the character of who our God is. He wants to reach down, draw us out of where we are, and place us on a better path. This is who He is. We see this time and time again in Moses’ story.

One of the things that I found so fascinating this week is that this is what He does over and over again in Moses’ life, He is trying to teach us that He is a God who will draw us out and set us down on a new path towards freedom. We even see that at the very beginning of Moses’ life. As I said before, Moses was placed in a basket. Really, a helpless situation – potentially to die in the Nile River. His mom just pushed him off and did not know what would happen next. But then Pharaoh’s daughter was there, and she reached down and picked him up out of the Nile and then she named him. Names are important in the Scripture. Just as Gershom was important, the name Moses is important. It says in Exodus 2:10 that **“She named him Moses, saying, ‘I drew him out of the water.’”** And again, in your Bible it might tell you what Moses means. But Moses means, to be drawn out. He was drawn out of the water; he was drawn out of danger and into safety. Out of slavery and into royalty.

This is the name of Moses; it means to be drawn out. He is the drawn out one. And now years later, God is drawing Moses out again. Did you catch that? This time He is not drawing him out of a basket in the Nile, He is drawing him out of despair in the desert. But he is not just drawing Moses out. He is trying to draw all of his people out because this is who our God is. This is what He is trying to tell Moses. This is what He says in verses 7 & 8, we just read them. I want to read them again because they say some really important words here. Verses 7 & 8, **“I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering.”** Now look at these words. **“So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land...”**

Now here is where I kind of nerd out! I just love this stuff, it is genius! It is almost like there is a divine writer to this stuff because it is just so smart! I do not know who wrote it, because it is just genius. But what God is doing here is He is saying, “I am going to draw my people out. I am going to lift them out.” What He is doing is He is using Moses’ name! Moses means to draw out. What God is saying is, “Moses – I am going to “Moses” them.” What God is doing would have

been unmistakable to Moses! As he is hearing this, he is hearing his name over and over again. And God is saying, “What I did with you years ago, I am going to do again. If you have any doubt that I can do this now, remember who I was back then. I drew you out of the Nile and I am going to draw my people out of the Nile region again because this is who I am.” God is reminding Moses of not only who Moses is, but who God is. God is the God who draws His people out of slavery and into freedom.

This is really the message of Exodus – this is who our God is! And I just love the progression of it. It is so awesome that Moses – I have drawn you out of the waters; now I am drawing you out of the desert; so that you might draw my people out of slavery. That is who our God is! It is not just Exodus, but it is all of Scripture. We see this happen with God all across Scripture. Psalm 42 says this, **“He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.”**

So, friends, just because you feel like you are in a slimy pit now, does not mean that you will forever be. Just because you are covered in the muck and mire now does not mean you will forever be. One of God’s best attributes – one of the things He does for fun – is He picks His people up, He cleans them off, and He sets them on a better path. A path towards freedom. He is eager to do it because God fights for our freedom.

One of the ways that He brings us into freedom is what we see Him do with Moses next in this passage. Because while God has just told Moses what He is about to do, He has given him this grand vision that He will set His people free, and He will bring Moses back into the land that he never thought he would enter into ever again. What a grand vision, what an exciting purpose! And here is how Moses responds to that vision. **“But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”** Do you notice what happens here? God says, “Here is what I am going to do!” And then Moses says, “But I am not good enough. I do not have what it takes.” And God says, “Hold up, hold up, hold up – I did not say anything about you! This is not about you. This is about me! I am here now, so why are we talking about you? This is not about you. This is about me, and this is how God sets Moses into freedom.”

3. God Flips Moses’ Focus

This is how God sets Moses free, He flips his focus. Because Moses just kept thinking about himself. All the ways in which he has fallen short. All the ways in which he was a failure. But God flips it and says, “We are not talking about you! This is my job. We are talking about me.” But Moses cannot help himself. Because time after time after time in this conversation he keeps bringing it back to him. Because I have got every single word that Moses said back to God, and we are going to just read them. Let us see if you can notice any theme. This is what Moses says throughout their conversation between God and Moses. Let us see if you can catch a theme here.

- **And Moses said, “Here I am.”**

- **But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”**
- **Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”**
- **Then Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you?’”**
- **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 only thing that Moses can think is the ways in which he has fallen short and the ways in which he has failed. Over and over and over again he is only thinking and talking about himself. One of my favorite moments here is how God responds to him. After Moses has said, “Man I just do not speak very well.” This is how God responds to him. He says, **“Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I,”** Not you... **“Is it not it, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”**

So, what happens here is God flips Moses’ focus. Their conversation looks like this. It looks like Moses saying, “I can’t, I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.” Meanwhile God is going, “But I can, I can, I can, I can. Moses this is not your job! Stop talking about you. This is not your job. We are not talking about you. We are talking about me! And I am here now! And I am the one who is going to set my people free! It is not you. It is me! I am the one who can set this bush on fire and have it not be consumed. I am the one who can topple kings and split the seas. I am the one who can bring down locust and feed my people with bread on the ground. I am the one who can do all of this – not you! So, take your eyes off of yourself and look at me. I do not need to hear about who you are. I am trying to tell you who I am.”

Man, how many of us here today need to hear that? The only thing that you can think about is everything that you have done. Everything that you have failed in. You are thinking, “Man I cannot get over this sin. I cannot defeat this bad habit. I cannot unify this relationship.” Of course, you cannot. Because you are not made to. It is not your job. It is His job. If you want to see any success in those areas of life; if you want to see any freedom in those areas what you do not need to do is, you do not need to learn to have a more positive self-talk. That is what this world is going to tell you. It is going to tell you that you need to start thinking better about yourself and uplift yourself – man that is not going to do it. What you do not need is more self-discipline. What you do not need is a better plan for yourself to set yourself free. What you do not need is to pull yourself up by your bootstraps. What you need is reliance on God!

Because friends, for some of you – your perceived sense of independence is crushing you. You feel it. Right now, you feel it. You are exhausted, you are tired, because you have been doing it on your own for how many years now? And can I just ask, how tired do you need to be to give it up? How exhausted do you need to be to give it up? How many more failures do you need to see to realize that you do not have what it takes. You cannot do it. But God can! God can! The only

freedom that you will find is when you flip you focus from yourself to Him. When you stop hoping that you will do it and start asking for God to do it. That is where you will find freedom!

But you might be thinking, “Man, Nate – I have heard this before. I have been there, done that. I have been around the block a few times and honestly you are using preacher words like freedom. And every single one of your points is an alliteration. And life is a little bit harder than that. I get that that is motivational, but life is different than that. And honestly Nate, I am tired. I am just tired. I do not have the fight to get in it. I do not have what it takes to keep fighting. I think I am done.” If you are there, you are not alone. That is where Moses was. Because even after God appeared to him in a burning bush, even after they had this back and forth, this is how Moses responds after all of that. Moses replies to God and says, **“But Moses said, ‘Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.’”** I cannot do it. Send someone else!

I have so been there. Man, I have been there. I have been there in my job. Most recently I was there Wednesday night. I had my first time ever with my baby. She is 8 weeks old now. It was my first time ever just one on one. We have had so many people around us who have loved us so well. My wife has done an amazing job already parenting her, but she was going to spend some time with some girls in our Life Group. So, she went over there, and I was excited! I was confident and I mean I am feeling like I am great dad, until mom left. And as soon as she left, I have never seen a baby cry more in my life. And I have never seen the things that I saw. There was an explosion that it went through her diaper; it went through her onesie; it went through her sleep sack thing. And as Jacie is sitting on the changing table screaming her mind off I am thinking, I do not even know where your other clothes are! And I do not even know what size you are! So, Lord, would you please just send Adalee home! I cannot do it.

Maybe you have been there in parenting. Maybe it has been something else. Maybe it is a hard conversation you know someone needs to have in your Life Group – and you are just thinking, “Lord, would you send someone else to do it?” Maybe it is someone who is hard to love on your street or at your work or in your family. And you are just thinking, “Lord, I know you are calling me to do it – would you just send someone else?” Maybe it is serving in our church, and you are just thinking, ‘Lord, would you please send someone else?’”

And I want to say this strongly – that is where we are as a church right now. Our mindset is someone else will do it. Someone else will make the coffee; someone else will greet people; someone else will park; someone else will help with kids’ ministry. Because 34% of our members are serving right now – not just here, but with any of our partners in Waco – 34% of our members. So, I know that there is a lot that goes on in life. I know that every situation is different. I know that I can be overstating it by saying this, but I think that means that 66% of our church body is thinking someone else will do it. Someone else will do it.

In fact, just most recently, y’all we have announced kid’s ministry needed about five weeks in a row. And then I saw it again this week and I was like, “Oh no! This is a major red flag” And I am not concerned about the kid’s ministry thing – they will be fine. I am concerned about the posture of our heart - not just in this area, but in so many areas of our life - is that someone else will do it. Someone else will take care of the kids; someone else will share their faith with my

co-worker; someone else will love on them; someone else will give. Our posture is someone else will do it and it is a dangerous posture.

But here is the good thing about our God. His plans will not fail because you do not want to participate. God is going to use whoever He wants, whenever He wants. And in this instance, He did send someone else. When Moses said, “I do not have what it takes will you send someone else?” He sent Aaron to partner with Moses. Moses did still need to go, but He partnered Aaron alongside of him. And Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, they did speak courageously, and God used these two people to set the Israelites free from their slavery to the Egyptians.

BUT...as soon as they crossed the sea into freedom, they started to realize they were still enslaved. They were still enslaved to their fear; still enslaved to their anxiety; still enslaved to their sin and they needed somebody else. So, years later, God sent someone else. In the form of a baby in Bethlehem. And this Jesus, this someone else, would not just topple a king who is keeping them enslaved on earth. He was going to topple our eternal enemy who wanted to keep us enslaved for all of eternity. And this someone else that God would send, this Jesus, would take all of our sin, all of our slavery, all of our death on the cross and He would die to it. And three days later, He would rise victorious. And as He rose from the dead, the sound that you heard were your chains falling off. Because as God sent someone else, He did not send someone who just like Moses would free us from a temporary slavery – but from an eternal one.

This is why I love this story – because it is so evident the story of Jesus in the story of Moses. Because while Moses did eventually go and do what God called him to do, Jesus was different. When God told Jesus, “Set my people free.” He did not wallow. He did not make excuses. He went to the cross for the joy that was set before Him. Because all He wanted was to set His people free for all of eternity. And while Moses does deserve honor because he did go. While Moses does deserve honor because he was used by God. It was just a temporary usefulness. What Jesus did, was eternal. He came with all power, all authority, all strength from heaven and he defeated every situation in your life so that you do not need to be stuck. So that you might be able to find freedom.

The only success that you will find in this life is by being reliant on Him. The only success you will find in overcoming your sin is being reliant on Him. Because the more I think about that opening story, about how that 12-year-old caught a fish, and I could not. The more I have thought about it, the more encouraged I have actually been. Because there was one difference between me and that 12-year-old. It was not that he knew what he was doing. It was not that I was not a very good fisherman. The only difference between me and that 12-year-old is that he had a guide. This 12-year-old had a guide who took him where he needed to go. Who gave him the rod he needed to use. Who gave him the lure he needed to use. And who told him to throw it/toss it/cast it – whatever he did – he told him where to put the thing to catch the fish. The guide told him everything to do. The only reason that kid found success was because he said yes. He did whatever his guide told him to do. It was not because he was better than me or more talented than me. He was just willing to be more submissive than me. He had a guide.

And friends, so do we. That guides name is Jesus. And He has what it takes to take you where you need to go, to tell you to do what you need to do, to tell you to say what you need to say.

And when we learn to submit to Him, just like Moses, we will be used by Him. We will find success – not because of who we are – but because of who He is. And friends just like in Exodus. Just like thousands of years ago, God is still setting His people free. Let us submit to Him today.

Let us pray.

Father, thank you that we do not have to be stuck in our sin. We are not stuck in our brokenness. We are not stuck in our fallenness. We are not stuck in our failures. But instead, we can have confidence that you see us; you hear us; you know our situation. And you do not want to leave us as we are. But instead, you want to pick us up and plant us on a firm foundation. You always are molding us and shaping us into the likeness of your son. I just pray that we would have willing hearts. That we would not try to hold onto our life by ourselves – with our own two hands. But instead, we give it over to you. Specifically, this morning – those areas in our life that feel final, that feel like they are over. God, would you come in and breathe a fresh wind. Would you do something? Father, even now as we sing and as we pray, I pray that your Holy Spirit would be active in our presence right now. And that you would be setting people free. That we would hear testimonies of chains falling off. Not because of what we have done, but because we have allowed you to work! So, God, would you do it again! Just like you set Moses free from the Nile. Like you set him free from despair in the desert. Like you set the Israelites free from slavery. Would you set us free today? So, Father, we trust You. And we are grateful for the hope that we can have in Jesus. Because He is alive, and He is with us, and He is for us it is in His name we pray – Amen.