

Sermon Series: Moses—God’s Poster-child of Meekness and Dedication

Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—6/6/10

Title: “Burning Bushes and Second Chances”

Text: Exodus 3: 1-10

Theme: When we understand our God as One whose primary nature is mercy and grace, we are ready to be available to be used by him, no matter what our past and where he wants to take us in the future.

Coming face to face with the Living God (Exodus 3: 1-6)

Sometimes, we approach God and the things of God with a **CARELESS, CASUAL CURIOSITY**

1. Moses didn’t expect God in the common place and so haphazardly approached the **theophany** of a burning bush
2. Expect God to show up in conversations, in common events with unexpected results, in the business of the day
 - a. **Illus.:** “pastor you take care of the God things, we will take care of the business”

Too, often **FEAR SUPPLANTS RESPECT** when we mistaken God’s almighty power for judgmental fury

1. Moses was afraid of a God whose power could burn a bush without consuming it
2. If we approach God’s involvement in our lives with fear we don’t understand God, yet.
 - a. *And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4: 16-19*

God calls us to **REVERENT ADULATION** as we witness and worship our saving God coming to our rescue

1. Are you walking on “**holy ground?**” — set aside for God’s purposes (vs. 5)
2. Conducting yourself in holy ways
 - a. *It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God. 1 Thess 4: 3-5*
3. Treating your body as God’s temple
 - a. *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. 1 Cor 6: 19-20*

Coming away from our encounter with the Living God

Comprehending what it means to be given a ‘second chance’

1. It is not about coming up with a plan and trying harder
 - a. Moses grasped his humanity (*Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. vs. 6*); but God emphasized the greatest of his mercy and compassion
 - b. Where are you looking right now – in the mirror (seeing your shortfall) or at the cross (seeing God’s reservoir)?
- 2.
3. It is receiving and accepting the resource of God’s grace to live out His calling for you and me
 - a. God resourced Moses’ future leadership by giving him the vision of where he would lead Israel
 - b. God authenticated Moses’ future leadership by showing “he” was God’s answer to Israel’s need
 - c. God authorized Moses’ future leadership by sending him to be his deliverer
 - d. *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. 1 Cor. 15:10*
 - e. **Illus.:** Grace trumps reason

Connecting with the calling which He has given to you

1. Listening for and to the calling of God in your life
 - a. Moses received a specific call with a specific plan — much better than when he assumed what the call was
 - b. *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9*
2. Responding to the calling of God in your life
 - a. **Illus.:** Pick up the phone (screening of phone messages)
 - b. Run ahead of God’s plan *like Moses*
 - c. Retreat from God’s plan *like Peter*
 - d. Resist God’s plan *like Jonah*
 - e. Run with God’s plan *like Christ*

f. *The Lord said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8*

Trying to Unwind Time

Police stopped a teen-age girl in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, after complaints that a car had been seen going around her neighborhood in reverse for some time. The girl told police that her parents had let her use the car, but she had put too much mileage on it. "I was just trying to unwind some of it," she said. **Oops, The Book of Blunders.**

Give him another chance

A college-football coach was faced with the possibility that his star player might be declared academically ineligible, so he pleaded with the math professor not to flunk the kid. "Tell you what, coach," said the professor, "I'll ask him a question in your presence. If he gets it right, I'll pass him." The athlete was called in, and the prof asked, "What's two and two?" "Four," replied the player. Frantically the coach cried, "Give him another chance! Give him another chance!" **Sports Illustrated.**

Definition of holiness

"Holiness does not consist in mystic speculations, enthusiastic fervours, or uncommanded austerities; it consists in thinking as God things, and willing as God wills." **John Brown, Nineteenth-century Scottish theologian, quoted in J. Bridges, The Pursuit of Holiness, p. 51**

Grace Trumps Reason

Why do we call grace amazing? Grace is amazing because it works against the grain of common sense. Hard-nosed common sense will tell you that you are too wrong to meet the standards of a holy God; pardoning grace tells you that it's all right in spite of so much in you that is wrong. Realistic common sense tells you that you are too weak, too harassed, too human to change for the better; grace gives you power to send you on the way to being a better person. Plain common sense may tell you that you are caught in a rut of fate or futility; grace promises that you can trust God to have a better tomorrow for you than the day you have made for yourself. **Lewis Smedes in How Can It Be All Right When Everything Is All Wrong? Christianity Today, Vol. 39, no. 13**

Exodus 3:1-10

¹Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

²The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed.

³So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up."

⁴When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

⁵Then He said, "Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."

⁶He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings.

⁸"So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

⁹"Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them.

¹⁰"Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt." [NASB]