



Several weeks ago, we began a new series on the book of Exodus. If you're coming to the series today, here's a quick recap of what we've studied: The people of Israel are in captivity and slavery in Egypt. Much of the story so far has centered around an Israelite named Moses, raised by royalty in the home of Pharaoh's daughter. He then kills an Egyptian who was beating a fellow Israelite. He gets found out and flees to start a new life in Midian. Last week, we introduced the story where he's in the wilderness one day, tending to his flocks, and God shows up in a burning bush and calls him by name. God tells Moses he is on holy ground and should remove his sandals. Today, we continue that story as God lays out His call for Moses' life.

**Key Passage:** Exodus 3:7-22

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Exodus 12 tells us that the Israelites have lived in slavery for about 400 years. For context, America declared independence on July 4, 1776, 247 years ago. The Israelites had been in slavery longer (150+ years) than America has existed as a nation.
  - a. How do you imagine the Israelites felt during these 400 years of slavery?
  - b. Have you ever experienced a season when you felt like God was silent?
  - c. Why does God not always rescue us immediately? (See Genesis 50:19-21)
  - d. Read Exodus 3:7-9. What do these passages reveal about God and His proximity to our pain?

The Israelites likely found themselves wondering – where is God? Why is He not moving? Why does He seem silent? These verses in Exodus 3:7-9 make it clear that God hears our cries for help – even when it seems like He doesn't.

- e. How should we respond when God seems silent?

These verses from David in Psalm 22:22-26 help us when we find ourselves in a season when God seems silent: "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation, I will praise you: You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him. From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever!"

David was confident, even in the silence, that God heard him. So, what's the call of God on your life if you're walking through a season like David or the Israelites? Lord, I trust you. I believe you hear me. I worship you today. (See Psalm 119:91-92)

2. After 400 years of slavery – God was suddenly breaking the silence. Review Exodus 3:7-9 and note how often God says, "I \_\_\_\_." What must it have felt like for Moses to hear these words directly from God, considering how long the people of Israel had been suffering in Egypt?
  - a. How would you have felt when God broke the silence with these statements?
  - b. How does the momentum of this one-sided conversation take a sudden turn for Moses?
  - c. How would you have felt if you were in Moses' shoes?
3. Why did Moses protest God's plan for him to be the one to lead Israel out of Egypt? Has there been a moment in your life when God called you to do something, and you felt, "I'm not cut out for that." Why do we discount that God could use us to do something rather than someone else?

In these verses, we see Moses at a crossroads – this is the biggest moment of his life. God plans to send him to Pharaoh to release God's people from slavery in Egypt. How does Moses respond? With complete and total insecurity. Moses' first response to God was, *"Who am I to do this?"* He reacts like many of us often do when God calls us to a difficult or new task – *"Me, God?"*

Have you ever had thoughts like Moses?

- Is God calling you to step out and lead in some way in the church?
  - Is God calling you to step out and lead your family spiritually?
  - Is God calling you to step out and share Christ with someone at work?
  - Is God calling you to take a step of faith in some area of your life?
4. How does God respond to Moses' objection? What promise does God give Moses? Where are we given similar promises in the New Testament? How have these promises sustained you in uncertainty?

How does God respond to Moses' reluctance? God says, *"I will be with you."* God tells Moses He will be with Him AS he fulfills the calling. The presence of God is enough to accomplish anything that God is calling you to do. It is not you but Christ in you that makes all the difference. It is not your presence in a situation but the presence of God that matters.

5. In Exodus 3:18-22, God gives Moses a peek into what will happen. Would you be more or less reluctant if you knew exactly how God's plans would turn out? Why does God not give us all the details?

God uses faith as the bridge between where you are and what He's called you to do. Sometimes, whether we say it out loud or not, we desire to follow God's call apart from faith. In other words, it must not be right if it's hard. If there's uncertainty, it must not be right. God often calls us hard things, and the way forward is faith. Remember that Hebrews 11:6 says, *"And without faith it is impossible to please him..."* If God calls you to step out in faith, remember there's joy on the other side of your obedience.