

Small Groups @ TBC - Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: 29 April 2018
Speaker: Mike Levy
Title: Revelation and Recruitment
Read: Exodus 3

Introduction:

Part of the series on Exodus.

The Place

"Horeb" means "Desolation" it was a lonely place almost a wasteland. Why would a shepherd take sheep to a desolate place for food? What place was Moses in with life? He had spent 40 years away from the court of Pharaoh and seemed to have settled in the life of a modest shepherd and dutiful son-in-law.

The Bush

Once again, we see fire as a symbol of God's presence, and often a symbol of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Notice how Moses had no doubt that what he was seeing, and hearing was real, no doubt that this was God speaking.

God hears

God says that enough is enough, he has seen what is happening to his people and he has heard their cries. He is going to lead them from a life of slavery where they are beaten, abused, misused and marginalized with Pharaoh at the centre to a new life in new land where God will be at the centre and they will be able to worship him. The parallels with what God offers to each person, of new life through Jesus the rescuer, are clear.

God shows that he cares, and he loves, he sees, and he hears. He sees what we are going through, he hears our cries and he does not turn a blind eye. We live in a land that is not our home and we have been given a new home in the kingdom of God. Never think that God does not care for us, never think that God does not see and hear what we are going through when life gets tough.

But God does not choose to rescue by himself - he chooses Moses, today he chooses you and me.

Moses doubts himself

Moses may not have doubted the burning bush and voice of God, but he doubts himself. He did not apply for this job, so he embarks on the worst job application ever. He puts forward every argument he can think of first, in respect of going to the Elders of Israel, then in respect of going to Pharaoh. He has tried to be the hero once and he is not keen to do it again. Moses has a point, it is thought that God had not spoken in this way in some 400 years - so why would people believe he is speaking through Moses now? In the end, in Chapter 4, Moses just says to God "look, I'm just not a good speaker".

Moses doubts God

Who is Moses really doubting? Does he really think that God chose him to fail? Or that God will not help him? Does he really think it is all down to himself? We will all have doubts about God, or if doubt is too strong a word then questions, but don't ignore them. There are two choices, we can give into doubt and walk away from God or we can

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wrestle with them, study more of the Bible, pray, talk them through - Doubts and questions are Okay because they can drive us deeper into the arms of God, it is part of discovering who he is and who we are in him.

Closing thoughts

Acts 7 vs 22 says "*Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and words*". Really? The person who said he was no good with words is looked back on in history as someone who was powerful in speech and words. What a transformation.

2 Corinthians 12 v 19 says "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness*" Moses could not do the job on his own, it could only be a work of God. We are all broken vessels and sometimes if we try to do things in our own strength we can get in the way of God, we are weak, so it is God who shines through.

Reflection

1. Moses went from the status of a son of a daughter to Pharaoh to a humble shepherd. Have you ever gone from riches to rags? What was it like? What did it do to your relationship with God?
2. What experiences have you had when you have clearly heard God's voice? What was it like? How did you know?
3. Describe a time when life has been difficult for you. Did you ever wonder if God saw? If God heard your cries? How do you respond if things just don't seem to get better?
4. How does it feel to be chosen by God to do his works (Ephesians 2 vs 10)?
5. What tensions come from living in this world but having our home in the Kingdom of God?
6. Moses doubted that he could do what God wanted him to do, have you ever had similar doubts? Talk about them. What doubts do you have about telling your story or God's story? What doubts do you have that it will make a difference?
7. Is it Okay to doubt God, or question God? What doubts, or questions have you had and how did you resolve them? What doubts, and questions do you have now?
8. What is God asking you to do for him right now? How much do you doubt you can do it?
9. When people look back on your life what would they say about the transformation that God has undertaken in you?
10. How do you know God's strength in your weakness?

Pray

Pray for one another in the difficult situations you may be in and pray for the doubts and the questions. Be real. Be honest with one another and God.

Follow up

Don't forget to follow up the conversations that you have, continue them over the coming weeks and continue to pray. This Chapter in Exodus could bring up some deep issues that need discussion and prayer over more than one small group night.