



June 30 – July 1, 2012

Exodus 3-4

*“Overcoming the Moses Mindset”*

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Have you ever gotten yourself into something and later felt like you were in “over your head”? Perhaps you took on something that turned out to be much larger than you realized. Maybe you were assigned a task that you didn’t feel qualified to do. If you’ve had experiences like these, then you know exactly how Moses felt.

Imagine how you would react if God just told you to: go back to Egypt where you were a wanted man, approach the most powerful king on Earth with the demand to release 3 million slaves, and then find out that you were going to lead the slaves hundreds of miles away to a new country that you’ve never been to and, oh, by the way, you’re 80 years old! It’s no wonder that when the Lord appeared to Moses in the “burning bush” that he had a few questions, an objection, and a suggestion.

We’re going to see that God is patient through all of Moses’ questions, as well as his objection, but when Moses makes his “suggestion” about finding someone else that he crossed the line and God became angry.<sup>1</sup> The questions and objection Moses had were about trying to understand the task and being concerned about his ability. But suggesting that God needed to find someone else implied that God had made a mistake. What Moses did was impugn the character and judgment of God.

God never makes mistakes. He often chooses some of the most unlikely people to do his will. And, in this case, God chose as his ambassador an 80-year-old shepherd who was a palace dropout with a criminal record, who had a stammering tongue! God picks each of us in the same way. He calls us to represent him to the world. Paul, in [2 Corinthians 5:20](#) wrote, *“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.”*

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<sup>1</sup> [Exodus 4:14](#) – *“Then the Lord’s anger burned against Moses...”*

## Moses' Questions

### 1. Who Am I?

- a. **Exodus 3:11** – *“But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?’ ”*
- b. It’s interesting to see what God didn’t say in response.
  - i. He didn’t say anything to Moses about Moses!
  - ii. He didn’t give Moses a self-help pep talk.
  - iii. He didn’t tell Moses to just “believe in yourself and you’ll do great things!”
- c. This kind of talk might have some value in the secular world regarding improved performance or personal or team motivation, but when it comes to representing God in this world and being his ambassador, it’s not about us; it’s about Christ in us!
  - i. God gave Moses a very important five-word response to this question when he said, *“I will be with you.”* (**Exodus 3:12a**)
  - ii. God told Moses *“the evidence that I have been with you will be when you bring out the Israelites from their captivity and worship me at this mountain on which you now stand!”*
  - iii. When we feel that we lack the confidence to properly represent Christ in this world, we need to remember, that the Lord will be with us.
  - iv. **Matthew 10:19-20** – *“But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”*
  - v. **2 Corinthians 4:7** – *“But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.”*
  - vi. **1 Corinthians 2:4-5** – *“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.”*
  - vii. The important thing to remember is that it’s only about us to the degree that our lives should properly represent Christ so we might be a good example of him in the world.

### 2. Who Is God?

- a. **Exodus 3:13-14** – *“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?’ God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.’ ”*

- b. His name is so sacred to the Jews that to this day they will not speak his name; they simply call God, Adonay (Lord) or Ha Shem (the Name).
  - c. In fact, Jews revere God's name so much that they will hyphenate the English spelling of the name G-d.
  - d. The proper name of God is Yahweh or the Anglicized version is Jehovah.
    - i. In the Old Testament, whenever you see the word LORD in all capital letters, the Hebrew word is Yahweh, and whenever you see Lord, it is Adonay.
3. What If No One Believes Me?
- a. **Exodus 4:1-5** - *"Moses answered, 'What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?' Then the Lord said to him, 'What is that in your hand?' 'A staff,' he replied. The Lord said, 'Throw it on the ground.' Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. Then the Lord said to him, 'Reach out your hand and take it by the tail.' So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. 'This,' said the Lord, 'is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers - the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob - has appeared to you.' "*
  - b. The staff was in Moses' hand because he had been a shepherd for the previous 40 years.
  - c. For David it was just a slingshot that God used to help him slay Goliath.
  - d. In Samson's case, it was the jawbone of a donkey that God used to help him slay 1,000 Philistines.
  - e. Jesus took the two fish and five small pieces of bread and used them to feed thousands.
    - i. The point is that God will take the little we have and do powerful things; we just need to give him what we have and watch we he'll do.

#### Moses' Objection

- 4. **Exodus 4:10-12** - *"Moses said to the Lord, 'O 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 Lord said to him, 'Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.' "*
- 5. Moses didn't understand that God doesn't call the equipped; he equips the called.

6. **Romans 10:14-15** - *"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?"*
7. We need to do our part to tell others, and allow the Holy Spirit to do his part in convincing them.

#### Moses' Suggestion

8. **Exodus 4:13** - *"But Moses said, 'O Lord, please send someone else to do it.' "*
9. Moses' suggestion crossed a line and God became angry with him, because he was concerned about his personal talents and abilities.
10. Suggesting that God find someone else implied that God had somehow made a mistake, which impugned the character and judgment of God.
11. Moses gives the same response to God that many Christians have given.
  - a. God says, "I want you to witness to your friend," and he or she says, "Send someone else!"
  - b. God says, "I want you to volunteer to serve in Children's Ministry," and he or she says, "Send someone else!"
  - c. God says, "I want you to go on a mission trip to Pakistan," and he or she says, "Send someone else!"
  - d. God says, "I want you to go on a mission trip to St. Vincent, St. Thomas, St. Lucia or St. Kitts" and he or she says, "Now you're talking, God! I'll go anywhere there's a Saint in the name." "Good, I want you to go to St. Paul, Minnesota!"

#### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read **Exodus 3:1-10** to provide an overview for this study.
3. Allow the people in your group to share experiences they've had concerning times when they have clearly heard the Lord sending and calling them to do a specific act of ministry.
4. Do you ask the same questions as Moses when it comes to a "God assignment"?

5. Do you lack confidence in the fact that the Lord has promised to be with you when he's called you?
  - a. Read and discuss [Matthew 10:19-20](#), [2 Corinthians 4:7](#), and [1 Corinthians 2:4-5](#)
6. Have you seen God work when others believed your testimony and witness?
7. Do you think the life you're living helps or hinders your testimony?
8. Have you had the privilege of praying with someone to receive Christ as his or her Lord and Savior?
9. Do you fall into the trap of thinking others will do what God is calling you to do?
10. Spend time talking about times when you refused to do what you considered to be a difficult assignment (Use Pastor Gary's illustration - See #11 above).
11. Read and discuss [Romans 10:14-15](#) and focus on the need for every Believer to share their faith with others.
12. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: truly believe that God is who he says he is, and that he is calling Believers to be his witnesses in their sphere of influence and beyond; be willing to go wherever and whenever the Lord calls them, and in doing so, that they would enjoy the blessing of knowing they have been faithful to the Lord.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).