

**©2002  
Fellowship  
Life of Moses  
Lesson 5: Who Am I?  
Ex 3:1-10  
12/8/2 (Update: 8/31/14)**

**Introduction:** You make a mistake; you think your life has changed forever; that there is no going back. In exile, you take your flock of sheep, which you have been pasturing for the past forty years, to an out-of-the-way desert valley that seems to symbolize your life. You see a fire in the distance that refuses to die down. You decide to take a closer look. As you draw closer to the inextinguishable flame, suddenly your life does change forever...

Ever had that feeling or that gnawing, Spiritual sensation that God might be calling or beckoning you or urging you to do more...step out into the deeper waters...above your head...no feet touching the ground...floating...resting...treading water...looking up into the heavens...laying on your back...and looking up at the sky above you...floating...in water above your head. Scary feeling, taking such a risk, isn't it? Scary feeling, climbing out of the boat to walk to Jesus? This is NOT supposed to be done. This is impossible! Men? Are you kidding? With my inadequacies? No way. Easier to stay safe. Easier to hide. Let others take the risks. Safety means elimination of failure, costs or consequences.

But if there are no risks, how does one ever truly learn to rest, trust or depend upon God, and therefore see his power and experience his provision? No risk; no God, or certainly NOT MUCH GOD! Risk, and much God...a lot of God! Why? Because we need him. Little risk and little need! What a boring, non or little-Spiritual existence? Why? So I can watch the next TV show? So I can ease into retirement? Are you kidding me? This is life? This is God? This is the Spiritual? Where there is God, there are risks. Where there is God, there is trust. Trusting God building huge Spiritual muscles—muscles that God can use to move mountains, or in need be, lead three million people out of national bondage, through a desert wilderness and eventually into a land of their own. Seem impossible. Well, it was done, and God used someone who said, “Who am I?” His name was Moses...

**Pray  
Read the Passage three times...  
Ask questions...**

**Exod. 3:1 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 desert  
and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.**

Was his father-in-law “the priest” of Midian, like the big dog? Did Moses just luck out here when he rescued his daughters at the well? Where is Midian? Kind of southeast of the Promised Land and the Dead Sea? So if he goes to the far side of the desert does he go closer to Egypt to the south of Sinai? (I just watched a movie on Lawrence of Arabia, which is a biography of a British soldier who galvanized the Bedouins Arabs into a fighting force against the German allies, the Turks, during WWI. When Lawrence crosses the Sinai peninsula from Aqaba, Saudi Arabia to Cairo, Egypt, a journey of a couple of hundred miles, his journey is a life-threatening one through the desert.)

Why is the mountain called Horeb? Is this the same mountain called Sinai that Israel will return to and receive the Law? Why was this called the mountain of God? Because this where God met with Moses and later his people? Why this mountain? Why a mountain at all? What was special about this place? Do we know which mountain this is today?

How did his flock handle the journey? Why did he make the journey? Was there water or grass there? How many sheep? Did Moses have help? Is this forty years after he had first arrived in Midian? Had he been there before?

**2 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.**

Note it says, the angel of the Lord, not the Lord. Did God or the preincarnate (preflesh) Christ or second person of the Trinity appear in the form of an angel in order to be present with his people? Did he look like an angel? Or was this an angel, such as Gabriel? Why flames of fire? Why a bush? How large a fire? How large a bush? How did it not burn up? How long did he see it? How far away was he when he saw it?

**3 So Moses thought,  
"I will go over and see this strange sight  
--why the bush does not burn up."**

It must have burned for a while.

**4 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."**

Why does it say, “gone over” instead of “come over” like the Lord is watching from a distance instead from inside the bush? Then it changes to God versus the

angel of the Lord. Do we have two different persons of the Godhead being referred here, the Father and the Son? God and the angel of the Lord? Why does he say his name twice?

**5 "Do not come any closer," God said.  
"Take off your sandals,  
for the place where you are standing is holy ground."**

Why was this holy ground? What is holy ground? Ground belonging to God? Was he trying to inform Moses that he was in the presence of God and therefore the ground was different, like being in heaven at the throne of God? Why does one take off shoes or sandals out of reverence for God?

**6 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.**

Who did he think was talking to him before this? What if he had not hid his face, what would have happened?

**7 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.**

Now he shifts back to LORD or Yahweh.

**8 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.**

Come down from heaven? Why was it flowing with milk and honey? Livestock and bees?

**9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me,  
and I have seen the way the Egyptians  
are oppressing them.**

**10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh  
to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."**

Moses has got to be freaking out. Me? But I am the guy with a price on his head?  
Me?

**11 But Moses said to God,  
"Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh  
and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"**

**Whos?** Moses, Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, God, angel of the Lord, the Lord, your father, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, my people, their slave drivers, the Egyptians, Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, Pharaoh, Israelites

**Wheres?** to the far side of the desert, Horeb, the mountain of God, there, in flames, within the bush, over, within the bush, Here I am, closer, where you are standing, in Egypt, come down, up out of the land into a good and spacious land, the home of...., to Pharaoh, out of Egypt

**Whens?** Now, when the Lord saw, then he said, at this, and now, so now

**Whats?**

- Moses takes his flock to Horeb, where he sees a bush that does not burn up, though it is on fire.
- When Moses goes over to see the strange sight, God calls to Moses from the burning bush and tells him to not come any closer and to take off his sandals. He is on sacred ground.
- God goes on to identify himself—he is the God of Moses' fathers.
- When Moses learns who is speaking to him, he hides his face out of fear of death for having looked upon the face of God.
- God tells him that he has seen the misery of his people, Israel, and has come down to rescue them and to deliver them to their Promised Land.
- He goes on to tell Moses that he intends to use Moses to accomplish this objective. Moses is to go to Pharaoh to bring the Israelites out of Egypt.
- Moses responds, "Yeah, right! Me?"

**Summary...**God uses an undying flame to gain Moses' attention; He tells him to respect the ground he is standing on; He identifies himself; He tells him that he

knows of his people's suffering; that he has come to rescue them and deliver them to another land, and that Moses is to go to Pharaoh to accomplish all of this.

Moses is incredulous that God has chosen him for this task.

**Bottom line...**Moses reacts with incredulity that **God has called him** to deliver and lead Israel out Egyptian bondage and back into his ancestor's promised lands.

**Whys?** What do I learn about God? Life? People? Myself?

- You never know when God may want to call you or get your attention.
- He may use the strangest things to get our attention, even a bush that doesn't burn up.
- You never know where God may want to get our attention; in this case, it was in the middle of the desert, while shepherding a flock of sheep.
- God can do anything; even cause a bush to burn, but not burn up.
- The God's presence is a holy.
- God knows our suffering and pain.
- God has his own time table for accomplishing his will and/or deliverance.
- It would seem that most of us would doubt a divine calling to accomplish the seemingly impossible. Not just because of whether the calling is real or not, but our own abilities. Only great people do such things. But in this case, that is God's point—I will bring about Israel's deliverance...you are just the tool...not that Moses doesn't have talent or natural leadership abilities that need to be trained and refined—talents, skills and abilities that no doubt he will need to accomplish such a mammoth undertaking. And yet, as is the case with everything, including a person's natural talents, without God, without biblical, Spiritual and moral constraints to the task or tasks we attempt, there seems to be a certain lostness or even emptiness to the task. I am not saying that God doesn't or can't use what some would refer to as secular, if there is in all reality, such a thing, which I am not sure there is, but what I am suggesting is that when we do life or something, whatever it is with God, there is something different, something special, something incarnate, something meaningful or purposeful, beyond the seemingly mundane. I suppose we can do things, knowingly or cooperatively, with God or unknowingly or uncooperatively with God.

The choice is ours. “With me...without me...with me...without me...with me...without me...” Tom Cruise' character, super agent, Roy Miller (Matthew Knight) in the spy thriller, *Knight and Day*, informing Cameron Diaz's character,

June Havens, concerning her chances of survival. *With me...good...without me...not good.*

**So What's?** Prayerfully connect a specific personal struggle to one of the above truths or principles and be willing to share or confess it with the group.)

### **A Look Back in Time (2002)...**

**Update:** Neil tells me that the nighttime temp needs to be above 50 degrees or my grass probably won't grow. But maybe that's a blessing because there are still a lot of rocks in that ground. I looked it up on the Internet, and one study I read suggested cool season grasses, such as perennial rye, should be planted by the end of October, so maybe Neil is right.

(2014: I can't remember how all this developed. I know today, I have warm-season Bermuda grass planted there because there are no trees. In fact, because of the recent drought and severe temperatures, I have been watering my hybrid Bermuda grass. So my guess is I waited to plant Bermuda until the next summer—the planting season for warm-season grasses.)

Oh well, I tried to “save my child via a papyrus basket,” but sometimes our best is not good enough. I am doing this by myself, and while I attempt to seek out the expert advice, it still does not work. I don't regret having done the work. At least it was something. And perhaps it was another learning experience—just ask Shann about his \$20 rick of wood that ultimately cost him 20 times that (on second thought, I wouldn't ask him). Sometimes our best intentions are just not good enough. Hopefully we learn from it.

With respect to Amanda, we had a talk this evening. This basketball season may close her athletic career for now. She is thinking about dance for next year. I told her I was fine with dance, but my only warning to her was to be careful trying to find something you are good at for your identity. Maybe she will be a good dancer and maybe she will not.

(2014: On a funny note: I don't remember much about this, but I do remember her taking some belly dances classes, and I think today, many years later, she can still roll her belly.)

She told me God had created her for a purpose, but she had just not found out what that was yet. I told her that her mother and I did not find our current niches until our early to mid-twenties. And the verdict is still out how well we do them.

I also reminded her that her identity is in Christ. Her value in Christ remains constant. The value of what we do changes with time and perception. Just ask Kurt Warner, QB for the St. Louis Rams football team. Less than a year ago he won his second league's MVP trophy in three years and barely lost the Super Bowl on a last-second FG by the Patriots. Now he can't hold on to the ball, buy a

win, and many in St. Louis are having second thoughts about last year's best player remaining as their quarterback. Life is fickle.

Whether you are good at something or not, to remain good at it or to become better, ultimately requires extra work, dedication and sacrifice—a delay of one's gratification...work first, play second—be it dance, softball, marriage, parenting, etc. Life is not all about fun. Often times it requires the simple drudgery of doing something again and again and again.

**This week's (2002) struggle:** I don't like how our debt keeps edging upward. It is not a net debt, I would just have to liquidate stocks and IRA's to pay it off, which as many know, now is not the best time to do so when the market is so far down. Still, every month we go further in the hole. I want to cut up the credit card and only pay for what we can pay for with the debit card, then begin to pay down on our debt.

(2014: I think we eventually got out of debt, and we don't use credit cards anymore, but in recent years we did have to use our home equity loan which was for housing improvements to pay for lapses in salary. And while I don't like this, if we had to, we could liquidate some capital on order to pay it off or just refinance our house to a fixed rate mortgage. So in essence, when the economy was down, we were able to pull out some of our home's equity to make it by.)

**Principles:** God knows our suffering and has his own timetable for our deliverance.

**Prayerful application:** Tend your flock, Joe, even if means taking them to the ignoble and dry desert, because you never know when God may call you to something special. And even if he calls you to that something special, it will not be a picnic. Be faithful. Enjoy your life. Don't panic. Stay the course. God knows my destiny. God knows my future. God will bless me in his time. For now, just remain faithful. Don't seek to escape the pain. Instead live with it via his strength and might.

**2014 Application...**

**Thanksgiving...**

A lot of good ministry going on both personally and strategically within the church. NOT perfect, by any means, but there is still life; there is still integrity; there is still fight; there is still that commitment to Christ and truth...the Rock exists. This past week, I was able to divide our Learning Center's ministry labors, management and direction up among my current LC coordinator and another gal. One will take 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and the other 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and below, and since both these gals are busy moms and do this purely as a ministry, this is a huge relief. On the other hand, apparently our high school situation, I am finding out, does NOT appear to be the healthiest, but we do have one of her former students who is

back in the area after college and is willing to help, so hopefully, there is a shot in the arm there.

### **Application...**

In addition, our *Back to School Water Bash* went great on Sunday! With Shelly's help, we continue to make progress on transforming Sustainable Love into something publishable. The Story of Sin via John's Gospel continues to explode into wonderful truth before my eyes. Things are happening, I guess is what I am saying. A nice, little *tenuous* momentum. I say *tenuous* because you never know, but I do think it is time to challenge our body. I think they need a challenge, a purpose, a vision...a direction. They seem hungry and looking for what is next Spiritually, and I think I know what is next—purpose in depth of relationship, ministry and discipleship...the risk to be shepherds. Not much different than Moses here. Certainly mature enough, but just needing that extra Spiritual something, push, challenge, vision, motivation...etc. The risk to go deeper; to be leaders; to risk the extra mile; to ask the tougher questions; to pray (as one my Spiritual daughters suggested the other day) with expectation.

Father, give me the words...give the match...to light a generation of Spiritual Moseses....

Your servant,  
jc

**Your struggle?**

**Principle?**

**Prayerful application?**

**What about your students? What are some of their current struggles?**

**Which principles seem to relate?**



**How could God prayerfully apply these truths to their lives?** (Just try a few in your preparation...then try leading the application in that direction. It may go another direction. Be sensitive to God's leading among the group.)

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