

2022 Theme - Extraordinary God + Ordinary People = Transformed Lives

Sermon Series - Transformed Leadership (Moses)

Sermon Title - Transformed Leadership by Faith Over Fear

Sermon Text - Hebrews 11:27 & Exodus 3 - 4

Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry

Full Sermon Notes

“Who else commands all the hosts of heaven? Who else could make every king bow down? Who else can whisper and darkness trembles? Only a Holy God!” And when you, like Moses, find your identity in the fact that this Holy God knows you and you know this Holy God, the peace, the power, and the very presence of God Almighty will bring you a sense of confidence no matter what you are facing in this world! And God knows we’re going to face some pretty scary things in this life. Jesus was honest with His followers about this...

John 16:33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Let’s pray and ask God to reveal to us how we can overcome our fears and persevere in our walk with God! Pray!

Have you ever been afraid? Have you ever faced the kind of fear that can immobilize you and either stop you in your tracks or cause you to flee for your life? God even made our bodies in a specific way to counter fear! I was in a training meeting with the chaplains for the St. Tammany Coroner this week and Rev. Donald Bryan, Pastor of The First United Pentecostal Church of Slidell led a session on dealing with stress. Stress and fear have a lot in common and sometimes one causes the other. Let me share with you some amazing insights he shared with us...

“The adrenal glands release one of the most powerful hormones your body produces called adrenaline. Adrenaline is a survival hormone. It helps us be fast or strong under threat. When humans encounter danger, we have two options: fight or flight. Fight or run. Each of these responses requires muscle strength. When the amygdala, which is located in the brain, senses danger, it reaches out to the hypothalamus, which tells the adrenal glands to release adrenaline.”

He went on to explain the impact of an adrenaline surge: our heart beats faster, blood pressure goes up, our bronchioles dilate so we can get more oxygen, blood vessels enlarge in our muscles, and glucose production increases for energy. He then stated this...

“Each of these responses is tailored to focus the body’s resources on survival.”

Here’s what we need to understand: stress is a normal part of life and we all face various stressors in life and they can be different for different folks. Regardless of the source of stress, there are two main kinds of stress: Acute stress and chronic stress. Acute stress comes

suddenly and evokes the fight or flight response. Thank God we have these abilities when we need them, but God also knows that we can't live in a constant state of fear or stress! In fact the whole point Pastor Donald was making is that living under constant stress and fear will kill you! I believe Moses understood both acute and chronic fear! When Moses left Egypt the first time I believe he was experiencing acute fear and his flight response kicked in...

Exodus 2:13 The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?"

Exodus 2:14 The man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "What I did must have become known."

Exodus 2:15 When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well.

But when you fast forward to our text in Hebrews you see a different Moses...

Hebrews 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

We know that the second time Moses leaves Egypt it's after he very boldly confronts the new Pharaoh and tells him to let God's people go! What happened? What changed? Moses had an encounter with God and it totally transformed him as an individual and it totally changed his leadership abilities. I believe there are people in this room today who have desired to be Godly leaders in your family, your workplace, at school, even at church, but you've been hindered by fear! Fear that you don't have what it takes, fear that you might mess things up, fear that God couldn't really use you because of your past mistakes, fear that no one would follow your leadership anyway! Well I'm here to tell you those are lies of Satan! Don't listen to him. He's been telling those same lies to potential leaders for thousands of years. We'll see this morning that Satan tried to get Moses to believe he couldn't be the leader or the deliverer of the children of Israel from Egypt. But something happened that took him from a place of fear to a place of faith!

Hebrews 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

From this verse we discover that Moses' transformed leadership came as...

By faith he left his comfort zone

He left his identity as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He left the fleeting pleasures of sin. He left the treasures of Egypt.

By faith he lost his fears

He lost his fears of Pharaoh. His fears of personal failure. His fears of inability.

By faith he learned to persevere

For forty years in Egypt, forty years in Midian and forty years in the desert.

By faith he looked on Him who is invisible!

He saw God in the Burning bush at Mt. Horeb, also known as Mount Sinai and he saw God by faith!

For you to become the leader God has called you to be will require... that by faith you leave your comfort zone

Leadership changes what needs to be changed! Management simply manages what is. Are you allowing the Lord to change what needs to be changed in your life for real transformation, or are you simply managing to live with the way things are?

For you to become the leader God has called you to be will require... that by faith you lose your fears

Leadership in any capacity requires that we lose our fear of being a leader.

For you to become the leader God has called you to be will require... that by faith you learn to persevere

Leadership takes time to develop and this takes perseverance! In other words, don't give up!

For you to become the leader God has called you to be will require... that by faith you look on The One who is invisible!

Leadership, especially spiritual leadership, absolutely depends on having the faith to look upon the One who is invisible!

The writer of Hebrews states that Moses, by faith left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger! There are times when a believer first encounters a difficult situation that they may be struck with initial fear. Initial questions of what am I to do now! That's natural and human. We talked a few weeks ago about the fact that while Moses was no ordinary child, he had fears like the rest of us! Moses did have ordinary struggles and fears. The difference for Moses came when by faith he made the decision to leave his comfort zone, lose his fears, learn to persevere and to look on The One who is invisible! For us, the difference also comes into play when we remember our extraordinary God and His word to us and His promises to us and we realize we don't have to fear the circumstances or the outcome because by faith we see the One who is invisible! We also, by faith, become willing to leave our comfort zone, lose our fears, and learn to persevere! Sounds good Pastor Larry but how in the world does this take place? How does this happen? What steps do I take? Well let's learn from Moses' example. At first Moses was afraid, but he overcame those fears by faith. Remember God's Word says this about faith...

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Faith is learning to believe and trust God even when we can't see the answer or figure things out! But again, how does this happen? Where and when does this happen? It happens as we grow in our personal relationship and fellowship with God Almighty! It happens when we meet God in a place of worship, wherever that may be! Zach, Andrew and I were talking the other day in our sermon planning meeting and Zach made this statement...

"When we fear, the best thing to do is to worship and that brings us to courage!"

Bingo! The first time Moses left Egypt at 40 years of age and fled to Midian, he was afraid because of what he had done to the Egyptian and he knew Pharaoh had found out. But while in Midian he has a very honest worship encounter with God and his faith begins to grow and mature. We discover in the Book of Hebrews that he overcame his fear because he saw the One who is invisible to the natural eye! And it is crystal clear later, at 80 years of age, when Moses led the people out of Egypt he no longer feared the King's wrath! Why? He had seen God! Once again, I could not say it any better than my old radio friend, Evangelist Oliver B. Greene...

"During his forty years in the desert in Midian he was schooled in the things of God. He had opportunity to become acquainted with God and to absorb Divine wisdom. In the first part of his life he was schooled in Egypt - he was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.' Acts 7:22); but the second period of his life brought learning and wisdom that was richer, nobler, higher - perfect wisdom because it came from God."

Remember that last week we discovered that God had obviously already revealed to Moses that he was going to be used by God to deliver the Hebrew people out of Egypt because Moses was surprised when the Hebrews he defended from the Egyptian didn't realize or recognize that he was their deliverer. But what happens in the 40 years of Midian is that Moses sees God in a whole new light! He understands that God is bigger than Pharaoh and that God was going to be by his side each step of the way! How does Moses come to realize this? It begins through an unexpected worship experience with God in one of the most fascinating stories of the Bible, found in Exodus chapters three and four. So let's look at that worship experience and see what we can learn from it. Let's discover how it applies to our lives and our need for God to transform us and cause us to become fearless leaders in a world of fear. If you want to follow along with the story it's found in Exodus chapters 3 & 4. The first thing that happens is this...

God gets Moses' attention

Exodus 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 wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

Exodus 3:2 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.

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

Lesson: It may not be a burning bush, but there's something going on in your life and God is trying to get your attention. Are you willing to investigate? Are you willing to go over and see what God may be trying to show you? Are you willing to listen to what God is trying to tell you?

God speaks to Moses

Exodus 3:4 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."

Exodus 3:5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."

Lessons: Walking into the presence of God is a privilege and very special! God takes the initiative in a relationship with us, but gives us a choice. When God sees that we are willing and open to see and hear, He will respond!

God lets Moses know who He is

Exodus 3:6a Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob..."

Lesson: God is not an impersonal force, but a personal God who has connections with His creation. He told Moses "I am the God of your father, and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob!"

Moses reacts

Exodus 3:6b...At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Lesson: Even though God is a personal God, He is also a Holy God, Righteous, Powerful and awe inspiring! To have a reverent fear and respect of God is a good thing, a proper thing. Too many today have no respect or reverent fear of God and that is a scary thing to me! The writer of Proverbs says...

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Moses was indeed a wise man! Let's see what happens next...

God reveals the mission

Exodus 3:7 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.

Exodus 3:8 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.

Exodus 3:9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.

Exodus 3:10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

Lessons: Roy L. Honeycutt Jr. said this in his commentary on these verses...

“The phrase “I have come down” characterizes the nature of the God who met Moses; a God who does not sit placidly in the heavens, lost in self-contemplation, oblivious to history...”

Roy L. Jr. Honeycutt, “Exodus,” in Genesis–Exodus, ed. Clifton J. Allen, Broadman Bible Commentary (Broadman Press, 1969), 327.

God really cares about people who are living in misery! He hears their cries! He is concerned about their suffering. He desires to rescue people from their slavery so that He can bless them! This is God’s mission and he is calling Moses to get on board. He is also calling us to His mission and we may respond in the same way Moses did...

Moses questions

Exodus 3:11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

Lessons: When God asks you to become a leader in your life, with your testimony, with your example, with your decision making, with your courage, it’s only natural that you will ask the question, “Who am I that I should do those things?” It’s at this time we have to decide once again where we will find our identity. Moses was definitely thinking about his weaknesses and inabilities! Don’t we do the same things sometimes! We might focus on our past mistakes, mess ups and lack of talent or ability! But we have to remember that God is not asking for ability but for availability! In fact he says as much when...

God answers

Exodus 3:12 And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

Lesson: God says “I will be with you!” God will not call you to go or do anything that He won’t go with you and empower you and provide for you all that you will need while on His mission! We have to remember that promise! The fact that God promises to be with us helps us to let go of our fears! And I love the sign that God tells Moses will prove that it was God who sent him...

Exodus 3:12b ... When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

The proof comes after we have stepped out in faith and trusted God and seen the victory. With God's help, we lose the fear and embrace the faith! Then when we realize, wow, God really was with me and He really did keep His promise, we worship!" So awesome!! Sounds easy, but I'll admit it's not always easy to set our fears aside and exercise our faith, as we see in this worship experience at the burning bush...

Moses asks more questions

Exodus 3:13 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?"

Lesson: It's okay to ask questions, although we will see in a moment that at some point we have to make a decision to trust God. Moses was very thorough in his questions. It's human to ask questions and God made us human! Here's what happens next...

God reveals His very nature

Exodus 3:14 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.' "

Exodus 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' "This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.

Lesson: Moses realizes this is not one of the pagon gods of his time and culture! This is no human created false god or idol. This God lets Moses know that He is in fact Yahweh God! According to Roy Honeycutt, Yahweh is the Hebrew word meaning, "I am who (what) I am The Creator God, The God who fulfills the definition and very meaning of God. Oxford Dictionary gives this definition:

"the creator and ruler of the universe and source of all moral authority; the supreme being."

By the very definition of supreme, there can only be one supreme being. We know there is only One God. We know Him in three ways, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but we know that these three make up the Holy Trinity of the One True God!! And then our story tells us that...

God reveals His plan

Exodus 3:16 "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt.

Exodus 3:17 And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.’

Exodus 3:18 “The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.’

Exodus 3:19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him.

Exodus 3:20 So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

Exodus 3:21 “And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed.

Exodus 3:22 Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians.”

Lesson: God has a detailed plan! He didn’t give Moses every detail of the plan at the burning bush, but gave him enough to understand that God’s plan was going to work! God knew the opposition and knew how to handle things. He knows what you’re up against as well and He’s got a plan. But you’ve got to trust Him. But even with this information we are sometimes like Moses...

Moses has more questions

Exodus 4:1 Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you?’”

Lesson: Once again, it’s human nature to worry and fret and fear. But at some point we have to decide whether or not we are going to step out of our comfort zones, lose our fears and learn to persevere because we’ve by faith seen the One who is invisible with our natural eyes. But sometimes God gives some tangible direction and He’s about to do so with Moses.

God illustrates His power

Exodus 4:2 Then the LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” “A staff,” he replied.

Exodus 4:3 The LORD said, “Throw it on the ground.” Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it.

Exodus 4:4 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.

Exodus 4:5 “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.”

Exodus 4:6 Then the LORD said, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, the skin was leprous—it had become as white as snow.

Exodus 4:7 “Now put it back into your cloak,” he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.

Exodus 4:8 Then the LORD said, “If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first sign, they may believe the second.

Exodus 4:9 But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.”

Lesson: God’s got backup plans! He’s got your back. He knows what He’s doing. But sometimes we still hold on to our fears like Moses. Listen...

Moses lays out his excuse

Exodus 4:10 Moses said to the LORD, “Pardon your servant, 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.”

Lesson: Remember what we said earlier? Satan is going to point out our weaknesses, our past mistakes and mess ups and try to dissuade us from moving forward with the call of God and His plans. But God is bigger and greater than our past and He is willing to help us overcome it. So now this happens...

God asks some questions and makes a promise

Exodus 4:11 The LORD said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD?

Exodus 4:12 Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

Lesson: God reminds Moses that He is the One who gives humans their abilities and that He would help Moses speak and teach him what to say! He will do the same for us if we will trust Him! But Moses is still reluctant!

Moses asks to be released from this calling

Exodus 4:13 But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

Lesson: We as humans, no matter the promises from God to be with us, just don’t want the responsibility of leadership. And while God is extremely patient His patience does at times wear thin...

God responds and provides an answer to Moses excuse

Exodus 4:14 Then the LORD’s anger burned against Moses and he said, “What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you.

Exodus 4:15 You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do.

Exodus 4:16 He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him.

Exodus 4:17 But take this staff in your hand so you can perform the signs with it.”

Lesson: God was angry with Moses, but God has really good self-control and still wants Moses to be a leader for the Hebrew people. God knew Moses' weaknesses and had already provided for them in his brother Aaron. God knows your weaknesses, your past, your struggles, your everything and He still has a plan for you if you will only leave your comfort zone, lose your fears, and learn that God will give you what it takes to persevere and complete the calling He has for your life! What will be your decision today? Moses had a decision to make and...

Moses decides to obey

Exodus 4:18 Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, “Let me return to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive.” Jethro said, “Go, and I wish you well.”

Lesson: It was not an easy decision for Moses, but he decided to walk by faith because he had seen Him who is invisible! And once Moses decides to trust God, this happens...

God speaks to Moses' original fear

Exodus 4:19 Now the LORD had said to Moses in Midian, “Go back to Egypt, for all those who wanted to kill you are dead.”

Moses' adopted grandfather, the Pharaoh he grew up with and who wanted to take his life had died. He would face another whole set of threats and challenges with his mission from the new Pharaoh, but Moses was now a transformed leader and left his fears behind knowing that God was going to be faithful to keep His promise to be with Moses. When you have a “know so” faith that understands God is with you in all things, your confidence level soars! And it's not self confidence, it is what I like to call Godfidence!! Let me explain something I've come to believe deeply: If doing all I know to do to be wise, and safe and if I do my best to be a good steward of my health and if I pray and trust God with my decisions, if God should choose to call me home, that's okay because I can say with the Psalmist...

Psalm 23:4 “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

You see, nothing gets through unless God allows it and if He allows it then there's a greater Kingdom purpose and I trust God's intent, His heart, and His ultimate will.

Confidence like that comes from Scriptures like these...

Hebrews 13:5... God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

Hebrews 13:6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Psalms 46:2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

Psalms 46:3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

And Jesus said this...

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

This morning we have some special guests who are great examples of people who have by faith been willing to leave their comfort zones, lose their fears, learn perseverance, and look to the One who is invisible to the natural eye! Because of the sensitive nature of where they serve as missionaries we will not broadcast this portion of our service. I would invite our folks at home to take this time to say a prayer for Christian missionaries around the world who are willing to risk all for the sake of Christ. The well known missionary Jim Elliot said...

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose!