

2022 Theme - Extraordinary God + Ordinary People = Transformed Lives

Sermon Series - Transformed Leadership (Moses)

Sermon Title - Transformed Leadership By Living On Mission

Sermon Text - Exodus 19:1-9

Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry

Full Sermon Notes

“You bore my weakness - You took my shame, Buried my burdens in fields of grace
You called me out - lifted me up, How great is Your love”

When you’ve experienced what Jesus did on the Cross by bearing your weakness, taking your shame, burying your burdens in fields of grace, calling you out of your darkness and lifting you up, why in the world would you not want to spend the rest of your life sharing with others that they can have the same kind of experience? Why would we not have a passion to let them know they too can have all of this in their life if they will but call upon the Name of The Lord? I want us to pray and ask God to teach us today about our mission as we recall the mission God had for His people after they had been set free from their slavery to Egypt! Let’s pray!

I want us to begin by reading our text today! It’s found in Exodus 19:1-9.

Exodus 19:1 On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai.

Exodus 19:2 After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

Exodus 19:3 Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel:

Exodus 19:4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.

Exodus 19:5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,

Exodus 19:6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

Exodus 19:7 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak.

Exodus 19:8 The people all responded together, “We will do everything the LORD has said.” So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD.

Exodus 19:9 The LORD said to Moses, “I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you.” Then Moses told the LORD what the people had said.

In this passage, God was calling the children of Israel to be on mission for Him! It was a powerful calling, an important calling, a life changing calling, a serious calling. The people had a

choice to accept the calling or to reject the calling! How do I know they had a choice? Because of the if-then covenant formula found in our text. Look at it in verse 5...

Exodus 19:5 Now **if** you obey me fully and keep my covenant, **then** out of all nations you will be my treasured possession.

And here's something very important to note: The people chose to enter into a covenant with God to be on mission with Him.

Exodus 19:8 The people all responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD.

Because of this covenant agreement, God had every right to expect the people to fulfill their commitment to the covenant! Sometimes people try to fault God when He holds His people accountable for not keeping their promises and commitments to Him, but He has every right to expect us to keep our promises if we make them. And as our Heavenly Father He has a responsibility to discipline His children when we go astray! The if/then formula is known as the covenant formula in the Old Testament. We see it often stated in the Old Testament. God reminded the people of Israel of this covenant in Jeremiah...

Jeremiah 7:22 For when I brought your ancestors out of Egypt and spoke to them, I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices,

Jeremiah 7:23 but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you.

So there is a choice involved in living on mission for God! With that in mind I want to share with you three awesome reasons to live on mission for God! The first reason is this...

1. We live on mission because of what God has done for us!

Exodus 19:4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

God was reminding the Israelites of the miracles He had done on their behalf to get them out of Egypt and free from their bondage to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. He fought for them and because He did the work, it's as if He carried them out on eagles' wings. He brought them out of Egypt to Himself. He brought them out of Egypt to the mountain of God and was taking them to the promised land! He saved them from their bondage, their slavery, and their misery! How does this apply to your life and mine? We've touched base on this in this series when we talked about counting your many blessings to see what God has done in your life in the past! This applies to our mission as well, because when we realize what God has done in the past, on our behalf, it makes a huge difference in understanding the importance of our mission! Hasn't God also freed us from our spiritual bondage, slavery and misery? We must realize that we would not be where we are without God's amazing grace, His forgiveness, His power, His guidance, His provision,

His peace and His presence in our lives! Maybe He's helped you overcome an addiction, a grudge, a bad habit, a physical illness, fear, anxiety, a failed marriage, a failed business, being bullied, or misrepresented! You fill in the blank for whatever it is that God has helped you overcome! And when I think of the brutality of the cross and the price Jesus paid for me with His sacrifice I realize there's nothing I could ever do to adequately pay Him back. The least I can do is to live my life on mission for Him! There was a Christian band years ago called Degarmo and Key. They had an album called The Pledge. This was the pledge...

"He died for me, I'll live for Him!"

I adopted this as a theme for my life and ministry! The Cross should serve as an inspiration, a catalyst, and a motivator, for all of us to be on mission for God to help others to experience the same amazing grace in their lives that we've experienced in our lives! Paul put it this way in the book of Romans...

Romans 3:21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

Romans 3:22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith...

Let me say it again:

"He died for me, I'll live for Him!"

With all of the crazy things going on in our world, my prayer is that we will have a new generation of young people who will rise up and rebel against the culture of our world and the seriously stupid and immoral things being crammed down their throats from media, and the horrible things they have access to on the internet. And I hate to say this, but some of our once trusted institutions, colleges and universities, are pushing some troubling ideologies on our kids! Our youth deserve so much more! Now let me be quick to say we still have some very Godly educators and they work hard to teach our kids the academics of mathematics, language, science, history and also seek to teach right from wrong and basic morality with their lives and words. I'm not talking about turning public school teachers into preachers in the classroom, but they shouldn't have to hide their Christian faith and beliefs, and God knows there's others that are preaching their secular, ungodly doctrine with no restraint! And what does this have to do with our message today? Well, this: When Jesus Christ has saved your life and transformed the way you live and lead with your life, you will find yourself on a mission to help others find what you've found! Living on mission is a natural response to the supernatural salvation of God in your life and what He's done for you in the past! And this applies regardless of your profession

in life or if you're a student! And again, we're not talking about trying to force or coerce anyone to come to know Christ! We are talking about sharing our faith, with passion and conviction, but in love, kindness and respect to those who may not agree with us! We love them and pray for them! Again, because of what God has done in our lives we simply wish others to know the same freedom, purpose and peace that we've come to know! In fact The Apostle Peter wrote these words...

1 Peter 3:14 But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened."

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

1 Peter 3:16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

1 Peter 3:17 For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

And one of the greatest reasons we can give for the hope that is in us our testimony of what God has done in our lives! Paul's testimony is a perfect example of living on mission because of what God has done. He said...

1 Timothy 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service.

1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

1 Timothy 1:14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

1 Timothy 1:16 But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

I shared my testimony with the youth group last Sunday evening. I told them how many times in my ministry with the sometimes really difficult things I've dealt with as a fireman, a chaplain and a pastor, I've realized over and over again, if it weren't for the loving grace of God that He offered to me as a teenager and which I thankfully accepted, I would be in a very different place! And this leads us to the second reason we live on mission for God...

2. We live on mission because of what we have become to God

Exodus 19:5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,

We have become God's treasured possession! Wow! Treasured Possession! That's pretty special. Of all the things in the universe, God treasures His personal relationship with you as His greatest possession! Technically we belonged to God in the first place because the whole earth is God's! But He created us in His image and gave us choices! He wanted us to choose to have a relationship with Him and when we choose Him, we are adopted into His family and become His treasured possessions! John said it well in John 1: 12-13...

John 1:12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

John 1:13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

It's not that He doesn't love others, but He will not force His love on anyone. Those who come to understand what it means to willingly follow God accept His love, grace, mercy and forgiveness! They are then willing to obey Him and place their faith in Him, and as a result become His treasured possessions. Those people are adopted into the family of God and are set apart and highly favored! But there is a danger if we don't properly understand this truth. You see, there's always been this issue with some of God's people: Some of the Children of Israel were under the impression that being God's chosen ones meant that they were chosen because they were somehow better than others and that they were chosen and others were just not chosen. If you take this mindset then there's no hope for those who haven't been chosen and there's no need to share the gospel. There were entire books of the Old Testament written to combat this erroneous idea, like the Book of Jonah. You see, the people of Israel began to think of themselves as the only ones that God loved and the only ones who could even be considered the people of God because they were God's "chosen people." But what they failed to realize was that they were chosen for the express purpose of serving God and sharing God with the rest of the world. Just as God had freed the children of Israel from Egypt, He could free others from their bondage and blindness to pagan practices and religions. We will see this specifically in just a moment, but I need to point something out to us: This problem is not just unique to the Jewish people of old, it is very much a problem with some in the Christian family today! Some people think they were chosen because they are better than others, or that they are loved more than others. But that's simply not the truth. Just as God chose the children of Israel because He wanted to work with that small group of people to prepare them and teach them to become His ambassadors to the world, He wants to do the same with us. He wants us to take His message to the lost and to those outside the family of God. The message is that He very much wants them to be a part of His family too! That if they will turn away from their wicked ways He will adopt them into His family and forgive them for the wrongs of their past! Just like He has done for us! You see, we've become the prized possession of God, but it's not because we were so righteous and holy and perfect! It is first of all because God created us in love and when we failed to be all that He created us to be, He offered to rescue us, to save us, and to free us from our failures! And second: when we humbly admit we've failed and need a Savior and accept Jesus as our Savior, we are forgiven and adopted into God's family by God's Grace! Paul was brutally honest with us all when He said

Titus 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.
Titus 3:4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,
Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
Titus 3:6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,
Titus 3:7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Andrew Ogea and I were talking about the sermon on Wednesday in our planning meeting. He said this: "You know, when you realize what God has done for you, making it to the top doesn't matter as much. When you realize you are God's treasured possession you won't have to find value in other things!"

Amen to that! You see, no matter what I accomplish when it comes to success, a lot or nothing, Jesus accomplished for me and in me what I could have never accomplished myself! As I've said before, I'm not better than the worst, lost sinner on this planet, but I am better off, because I've allowed Jesus to make me a child of God by His Sacrifice on the Cross! I am a child of The Living God by adoption. Born a second time, not of the flesh but of the spirit, adopted into the family of God! You just can't get more on top of the world than that because you're no longer an orphan, all alone and living in fear. And you are no longer a slave, driven, trapped and destroyed by the desires and things of this world. Once Jesus becomes your Savior, if you will allow Him to be your Lord on a daily basis you can overcome the old way of life! I must read this verse again, I read recently...

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

You see, letting Jesus be your Savior is a one and done, but letting Him be your Lord is a daily decision! Your new mission in life is to live for the One who died for you!! Talk about transformed leadership! And God's Word bears this out in Ephesians 3:8-9, as you know one of my most favorite passages...

Ephesians 2:4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,
Ephesians 2:5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.
Ephesians 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
Ephesians 2:7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—
Ephesians 2:9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

God saves us not by our good works, but He saves us to do good works!! He saves us to live on mission! And this leads us to our final point...

3. We live on mission because of what we have become to others!

God continues His instructions to Moses on what to tell the people of Israel. He says...

Exodus 19:6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

While this says we will be for God a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, this is also what we will become to others, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation! Let me explain. You see we become God's representatives to the world. He says...

Exodus 19:6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests

A. We have become a Kingdom of Priests

What is a priest? A priest is someone who intercedes for someone else in prayer. A priest is someone who shares the message of God with someone who needs to hear that message. A priest is someone who helps carry the burdens of someone who is struggling with the cares of life! And who is a priest? Who is called to be a priest? Well, according to God's Word to Moses for the Israelites, they were to be a kingdom of priests! And who were they to serve? Were they called to be a kingdom of priests just to serve themselves? Were they supposed to only be priests for the chosen ones? Priests were actually supposed to be servants of God and a light to others by serving others and not just the Israelites! Listen to what God said in the book of Isaiah...

Isaiah 42:6 "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, Isaiah 42:7 to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

And when you look at the history of the children of Israel, you see that they struggled with this calling! In fact they despised and hated gentiles and wanted nothing to do with them. Of course we all know that they had been terribly mistreated at times by the gentiles so it stands to reason they would feel this way. But God wanted to reach the gentiles with the truth of His love for them. And the question the Israelites should have been asking themselves would be this...

Where would we be without God's help, His mercy and forgiveness, His deliverance from Egypt and His patience with a stubborn and rebellious people? And what about us? Maybe we need to

ask the same kinds of questions! You see, we too have been called by God to take His love to a lost and dying world! God's Word says it plainly...

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

When it comes to the Body of Christ, every member of the Body has priestly duties! It is not just the professional clergy, pastors, and priests, it is all of us who name the name of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior! In fact, we believe in what is called the Priesthood of the Believer! In other words, if you are a follower of Jesus and have accepted Him as your Savior then you are a child of God and you can talk directly to God because of your relationship with Jesus His Son! Peter also said this...

1 Peter 2:4 As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—

1 Peter 2:5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

So as a result, your priestly role as a child in God's Kingdom is to take the good news that Jesus died and rose again to make a way for all who confess their sins and call upon the Name of Jesus to be saved! What a responsibility, what a privilege! But don't miss the fact that there's a second part to this last point. We are not only to be a kingdom of priests, but...

B. We are to become a Holy Nation

Exodus 19:6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

What does it mean to be a holy nation? I believe that this refers to the way we as God's children live our lives! We certainly don't want to be like the Sadducees and Priests of Jesus' day where their lives and teachings did not match up! Remember?

Matthew 23:1 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples:

Matthew 23:2 "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

Matthew 23:3 So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

Matthew 23:4 They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Matthew 23:5 "Everything they do is done for people to see...

Jesus went on to say...

Matthew 23:11 The greatest among you will be your servant.

Matthew 23:12 For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

We humble ourselves admitting we are sinners in need of a Savior to set us free and we call upon the Name of the Lord. We then find ourselves motivated to live on mission with God to share His love with others! Let's be honest, we all live on mission for something. What mission are you on? Pleasure, treasure, fame, success? Or are you on God's mission to show lost, lonely, confused, troubled and hurting people that there is hope in Jesus? What could be more fulfilling than to see a soul set free and a life saved? And we must ask ourselves, does my life back up my confession? I'm not talking about being perfect, but I am talking about seeking to live what we preach by the power and with the help of Almighty God! I'm not talking about never making a mistake, but I am talking about being sincere in our desire to live for God's glory and honor in a way that causes other people to want to know the Jesus that we serve! I love the way theologians Ryken and Hughes put it when comparing the Exodus experience for the Israelites with our experience as Christians...

"First God rescues us from our sin; then he teaches us how to live for his glory. If personal obedience had to come first, we would never be saved. But as it is, God saves us in Christ before he calls us to live for Christ."

Philip Graham Ryken and R. Kent Hughes, Exodus: Saved for God's Glory (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 495.

John Mackay writes: "The people have already been freed by divine grace and power. They are not given the law to save themselves, but so that they might continue to enjoy the salvation they have already been given."

Philip Graham Ryken and R. Kent Hughes, Exodus: Saved for God's Glory (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 497.

"So Pastor Larry, you've sure been asking us a lot of questions this morning! How about letting us ask you a question? Just how are we to be a holy nation and live this kind of life, especially in this world in which we find ourselves?" Good question and I think I have a passage or two for that and they actually remind us of our theme for this year...

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Paul said...

1 Corinthians 1:26 Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

1 Corinthians 1:27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

1 Corinthians 1:28 God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,

1 Corinthians 1:29 so that no one may boast before him.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

1 Corinthians 1:31 Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

And then Paul said this in his second letter to the Corinthian church...

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

2 Corinthians 5:19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

I hope that answers your question!

We live on mission because of what God has done for us! Set us free!

We live on mission because of what we have become to God! His treasured possession!

We live on mission because of what we have become to others! A kingdom of priests and a holy nation!

Let's pray!