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Growing Our Faith
“Faith To Overcome Our Limitations”
(Part 3)

Intro: Story of driving log truck back from Ripplebrook

- In the same way, in order to follow God, we have to get past our fears and excuses why we can't do the things He asks of us. We have to have a faith that overcomes our limitations. Today we have another Biblical character to learn from.
- Summarize Moses
- God wanted Moses to have a faith that overcame limitations. We're going to look at the 4 (excuses) limitations Moses used with God and see what God's response was to each one! God wants us to have this kind of faith as well. A faith to overcome limits

I. The Limitation Of Significance

A. I am too insignificant for God's purposes.

Ex. 3:11 “But who am I to appear before Pharaoh?... How can you expect me to lead the Israelites out of Egypt?” (NLT)

1. God, listen...I'm a sheep herder and Pharaoh is the leader of the most powerful nation of the world. I am way too insignificant for this job! You need to send someone with a little more significance than me.
2. Moses had a self-image problem. He thought that he was so insignificant, that God couldn't use him in this way.
3. I think a lot of believers have the same issue and they use the same excuse. “God, who am I?”...to teach that class / lead that home group / share my faith / go on that mission trip / serve in leadership / start a brand new ministry / counsel a hurting person / help a broken marriage?
4. I'm not a pastor / didn't go to Bible college / don't have a degree / haven't been a Christian that long / haven't been at Foothills that long / I have a past / I'm too insignificant for things like this God!
5. God has a habit of using, what appears to be, insignificant people to change the world.

I Cor. 1:26-28 “Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world’s eyes, or powerful, or wealthy, when God called you. Instead, God deliberately chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are so wise. And He chose those who are powerless... God chose things despised... things counted as nothing... and used them...” (NLT)

6. Thinking you’re too insignificant for God’s purposes just doesn’t hold up with God! In fact...it qualifies you! You’re just who He’s looking for!

B. Faith for God’s purposes comes from experiencing the presence of God

Ex. 3:12 “Then God said to him, ‘I will be with you...” (NLT)

1. God wanted Moses to know that his significance for the task didn’t come from inside himself, it came from the fact of God’s presence was going to with him.
2. How could he be too insignificant if the God of the universe was with him? It’s kind of like an ambassador of the United States. In himself, he’s really not that significant. What makes people listen to him (what gives him clout) is in the fact of who he works for!
3. When a person gives their life to Jesus, the presence of God resides within them. How can you be insignificant if Jesus Christ is in you! If the same God that was with Moses is with you! If we represent God’s interests here on earth as His ambassadors! Jesus died on a cross for you!
4. Our significance doesn’t come from our performance / achievements / our bank account. It comes from our relationship with Jesus Christ. It comes from the reality of His presence in my life. If He’s in my life, then there is no such thing as an insignificant Christian!
5. How do you think about yourself? Are you paralyzed from your perceived insignificance or empowered by the fact that God is with you!

II. The Limitation Of Authority

A. I don’t have enough authority for God’s purposes

Ex. 3:13 “But Moses protested, ‘If I go to the people of Israel and tell them... They will ask, which god are you talking about? What is his name? Then, what shall I tell them?’” (NLT) (God of the burning bush???)

1. In Egypt, they had a god for everything. The Egyptians were very religious people. They had the sun god- RA / moon god / gods of the Nile / god of the underworld / so it would be natural for the Israelites to ask, “which god appeared to you?” By whose authority are you saying these things?
2. Once again I think Christians use the same excuse. What right do I have to attempt to make a difference in someone’s life / in a current ministry / in a community? I have no authority to change anything.

3. Authority is an important issue. Impacts our behavior and the reactions of others. How so? Many of you know that Jim Velez and I are friends (explain) He lives on Eagle Creek – Private property. But, he has given me permission to fish anytime I want to! If anyone asks me who I am, I just tell them I’m Jim’s friend.
4. The right to fish (the authority) didn’t come from me, it came from another. Because I have been given it, I fish with confidence on private property. That authority impacts what I do and the neighbors (they don’t call the police)
5. Most Christians just don’t understand the authority that has been given to them from Christ. They’re still standing on the river bank wishing they could go fishing and they don’t even realize they already been given permission! They’ve already been authorized to fulfill God’s purposes.

B. Faith for God’s purposes comes from experiencing God’s authority

Ex. 3:14 “God replied, I Am the One who always is, tell them I AM has sent me to you...the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...” (NLT)

1. God made it very clear to Moses that he wasn’t talking to some puny Egyptian god. He was talking to the One Who Always Is...the Great I Am. The same God who appeared to their ancestors Abraham / Isaac / and Jacob! This is the Alpha and Omega / beginning and the end / the Creator of everything.
2. If Moses was looking for authority to do what he was asked to do...he just got it! He couldn’t be more authorized!
3. So now we think, “Wouldn’t it be amazing to have been given authority like that from God just like Moses received? You know how much confidence that would give me to live my Christian life?”
4. What are you waiting for? This is exactly the kind of authority we already have been given in Christ! Too many Christians waiting on the river bank waiting for permission to go fishing when it’s already been given.

Luke 5:10 “I’ll make you fishers of men”

Matt. 28:18-19 “All authority has been given to Me...Now go and make disciples. Start fishing!”

II Cor. 5:20 “...we are Christ’s ambassadors

Acts 1:8 “...you shall be My witnesses...”

Eph. 4:1 “...lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God.”

5. Our authority comes from Christ. This is why we do what we do at this church. We believe we are authorized to make a difference / to be channels of transformation / to be a river of blessing / authorized to be fishers of men.

6. Then, when the enemy shows up and tells us we don't have permission to fish for men in his community / don't have permission to bring blessing / we just tell him who sent us! We remind him of our authority in Christ.
7. We've been given tremendous authority, but we have to believe it and walk in it.

III. The Limitation Of Credibility

A. I don't have enough influence for God's purposes

Ex. 4:1 "But Moses protested again, 'Look, they won't believe me. They won't do what I tell them. They'll just say, 'The Lord never appeared to you.'" (NLT)

1. I can't influence them God! I don't have enough credibility. They're not going to do what I tell them. I can't even get the sheep to mind me! "Moses, you've been 40 years in the desert and it has affected your mind!"
2. I think it's very easy to be like Moses when we see the task ahead of us and think the very same thing. How can I be involved in seeing God transform a town / a school / a geographic area? Reach 1000's of unchurched people??? Purchase this complex. I can't influence anything?
3. I think there is such a "defeatist" mentality with most believers today. The problems facing us are so big, how can I make a difference? I can't influence anything. No one will listen to me...so we do nothing.
4. I believe this has caused the church to withdraw from culture instead of impacting it. We're so convinced we have no credibility in our culture we've ceased trying to influence it.
5. Maybe it's because our attempts in the past have been failures. Political not God's power (Moses tried in his own strength once. Maybe he was thinking of this – Explain killing the Egyptian and the Israelites response)

B. Faith for God's purposes comes from experiencing God's power

Ex. 4:2-3 "Then the Lord asked him, 'What do you have there in your hand?'" 'A shepherd's staff', Moses replied. 'Throw it down on the ground', the Lord told him. So Moses threw it down and it became a snake..." (NLT)

1. God told Moses to throw down something very ordinary and then He did something supernatural with it. In fact, He did this 2 more times. (Moses' hand and water turning to blood.) They will follow when they see My power
2. Influence will result from the consistent demonstration of God's power. God's power is a testimony as He takes ordinary things / people and does supernatural works with them.

II Cor. 4:7 "But this precious treasure – this light and power that now shines within us – is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So

everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own.” (NLT)
Power is a witness!!!

3. Unfortunately, most Christians just never trust God enough to be a witness of His power to the unchurched world. They assume their ordinary life has nothing to offer when it is in the ordinary things that God uses to do the supernatural.
4. Some of you are having such a hard time with generosity and obeying what God says in His word. God’s telling you to throw down your staff, yet you keep clutching it ever so tightly. What’s that in your hand? My checkbook. Throw it down!” Until you do, you’re cutting yourself off from His power.
5. You’ve heard me say that the purchase of this complex will be a testimony to this community. How so? When a bunch of normal unimpressive people believe God and the supernatural happens publicly for all to see, He will get the glory! God’s power is a testimony.
6. People will come to Christ through the purchase of this building. WHY? Because they’ll know that God is in this place! They will witness His power among us.
7. If I am going to overcome the limitation of my credibility, I must believe that God is going to demonstrate His power when I obey Him. By not obeying Him, I am hindering His witness and I am limiting my influence.

IV. The Limitation Of Resources

A. I don’t have the resources for God’s purposes

Ex. 4:10 “But Moses pleaded with the Lord, ‘O Lord, I’m just not a good speaker.’ I never have been, and I’m not now, even after You have spoken to me. I am clumsy with words.” (NLT)

1. God, I don’t have what it takes to do this. I’m not gifted enough / talented enough / polished enough / I don’t have the right personality for this. I don’t have the internal resources for this.
2. Ever felt like this? I think this is one of the biggest reasons people don’t get involved in ministry and allow God to use them. They just don’t think they have what it takes.
3. We are stuck looking at all our inabilities and God is simply asking us for our availability. We see everything we’re not and God sees everything we could become. We see our puny resources and God sees His!
4. We think that a lack of resources (whether that be internal or physical) is enough to disqualify us for service. Excuse that lets us off the hook!

B. Faith for God’s purposes comes from experiencing God’s provision

Ex. 4:11-12 “Who makes mouth?...Who makes people so they can speak or not speak, hear or not hear, see or not see? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and do as I have told you. I will help you speak well, and I will tell you what to say.” (NLT)

1. I love God’s answer to Moses. “Who makes people’s mouths?” Who’s the Creator, Moses? Don’t worry, I’ll tell you what to say. I’ll make up the difference! I’ll make up for the limitations!
2. We can live our lives in fear over our limitations of resources or we can live by faith anticipating the provision of God. Which way do you live? Most people live their lives based upon available resources rather than available provision from God.
3. Faith counts on God’s provision. Remember last week...Abraham...Named the place Jehovah Jireh...The Lord My Provider.
4. As we all pray about how God wants us to financially support what He’s wanting to do here, I know it would be easy to feel just like Moses. “God, I just don’t have the financial resources to do this! Send someone else! Let other people make this happen!
5. And God says, “Who owns everything? Who is the Creator of everything? Who has the power to distribute wealth wherever I want?” “Now go, and do as I have told you. I will help you!” I’ll provide for you. Your limitations are just opportunities for me to provide for you, not excuses so you don’t have to follow. (The rest of the story? One of the most incredible epics!

What are the limitations that are holding you back? What are the excuses you’ve been using with God over why you can’t do what He asks? Limitations of Significance / Authority / Credibility / Resources. Are you willing to dump your excuses and simply follow.