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Objections Overruled



When have you accomplished something you didn't think you could do?

QUESTION 1

#BSFLbroken

God will work through us despite our shortcomings.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

My office is full of artwork, and I'm proud of my collection.

The artwork that graces my wall is a compilation of squiggly lines, letters, pandas, and a drawing of yours truly flying with a cape. The amazing thing about children is that, no matter how their drawings look or how far outside the lines the colors go, they are always so proud of their work. (And so are their parents.)

So what happened? When did we lose that pride in our work? When did we start comparing ourselves to others? Instead of being satisfied with what we can accomplish, we tend to measure ourselves against others, and we sometimes conclude we're not capable.

While our culture may value our appearance, the size of our bank accounts, and the trophies on our walls, God operates with a different standard. Instead of valuing us by what we can or cannot do, God accepts us as we are. As we see in the life of Moses, God takes us just as we are—broken vessels with blemishes, weaknesses, and all—and accomplishes what we never thought was possible.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Exodus 3:11-12 (CSB)

¹¹ But Moses asked God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” ¹² He answered, “I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I am the one who sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain.”

Any one of these scenarios could cause a person to have issues.

- » You were separated from your mother as an infant because a death sentence hung over your head.
- » Your birth mother nursed you, but then you were handed over to a different woman who adopted you and brought you up.
- » You committed murder then fled to a foreign country where you took on a whole new way of life.

Moses experienced all three of these—and after all that, he saw a burning bush and heard the voice of God commanding him to go back to the place he came from (and where he had murdered someone). Had that been one of us, we might have decided it was time to seek professional counseling!

Or maybe we’d finally realize God is up to something.

That was Moses’ story. Although he grew up as royalty in Egypt (having been adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter) there were moments in his past holding him down and causing him to doubt God. When God issued His call to Moses, he asked, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” (v. 11). Moses could not believe that God was asking *him* to go back and bring the Israelites out of Egypt.

It’s easy for us to find objections and rationalize when faced with a God-given task. But God extends to us the same answer He gave to Moses’ doubts and negative self-talk, “I will certainly be with you” (v. 12).

How comfortable do you feel about doing what God is currently calling you to do?

QUESTION 2

Exodus 4:10-12 (CSB)

¹⁰ But Moses replied to the LORD, “Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent—either in the past or recently or since you have been speaking to your servant—because my mouth and my tongue are sluggish.” ¹¹ The LORD said to him, “Who placed a mouth on humans? Who makes a person mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹² Now go! I will help you speak and I will teach you what to say.”

Moses was living in the shadow of his past. In his own effort and in his own way, Moses had tried to rescue one Israelite 40 years earlier. He failed miserably. He knew his shortcomings.

Moses was allowing his past sin and his perception of himself to shape his future. Years of running and living in fear had deeply affected his identity. God told Moses He Himself would be with him, and He gave Moses signs and wonders to perform that would prove this. Yet Moses could only respond to God with words like, “but ... who am I ... what if ... I have never.”

When Moses gave the excuse “my mouth and my tongue are sluggish” (v. 10), what exactly did he mean?

- » Maybe it was psychological. A lot of people can relate to that. They don’t like to speak in public; in fact, many are terrified at the idea of saying something in front of others.
- » Maybe it was educational. Even though Moses grew up in the house of Pharaoh, maybe he didn’t feel he could talk on their level anymore. Maybe after 40 years of shepherding, Moses felt his skills with the Egyptian language were too rusty.
- » Maybe it was a speech impediment. Moses may have had a stutter or other limitation that made him anxious when speaking in front of others.

Whatever the reason, Moses did not see himself as the best person to speak publicly—and certainly not to speak to Pharaoh.

How do these verses help us understand the way God uses us to accomplish His plans?

QUESTION 3

How would you summarize the root of Moses' objections throughout these passages?

QUESTION 4

The problem was that Moses was looking at himself and not at the One who was calling him. Then God reminded Moses just who it was that made him the way he was. To paraphrase verse 11, God told Moses, "I see that you think you are slow and hesitant in speech, and you have never been eloquent in communication. Well, who do you think gave you the ability to talk in the first place? Now get up and go!"

Exodus 4:13-17 (CSB)

¹³ Moses said, "Please, Lord, send someone else." ¹⁴ Then the LORD'S anger burned against Moses, and he said, "Isn't Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, he is on his way now to meet you. He will rejoice when he sees you. ¹⁵ You will speak with him and tell him what to say. I will help both you and him to speak and will teach you both what to do. ¹⁶ He will speak to the people for you. He will serve as a mouth for you, and you will serve as God to him. ¹⁷ And take this staff in your hand that you will perform the signs with."

Earlier, God told Moses, "I will certainly be with you" (3:12). Now in chapter 4, God gave Moses a play-by-play of the immediate future, showing Moses three miracles He would do through him to prove





How can we help one another move out of our comfort zones in order to obey God?

QUESTION 5

that God had sent him (4:1-9). You'd think that would have built enough confidence in God that Moses would be able to obey. Unfortunately, even that didn't convince Moses.

Instead of replying, as Isaiah did, "Here I am. Send me" (Isaiah 6:8), Moses begged, "Please, Lord, send someone else" (v. 13). No wonder we read in the following verse: "The LORD'S anger burned against Moses" (v. 14).

Moses failed to understand that God doesn't just want those already equipped and competent to call into His service; He is looking for faithful servants to call so He can then equip them. When God calls you to Himself, He will equip you with all you need to follow Him, live day-by-day, and experience His joy and fullness in life.

Fortunately for Moses, God was merciful; He relented and allowed Moses' brother, Aaron, to go with him. But God did not let Moses off the hook. God didn't say, "All right, Aaron will speak and you can just manage the process." Instead, God said, "You will speak with him and tell him what to say. I will help *both you and him* to speak and will teach *you both* what to do" (v. 15, emphasis added). God still insisted that Moses speak because He had a greater plan in store for him.

Fast-forward a few chapters. Moses and Aaron confronted Pharaoh and began performing signs and miracles. God used Moses and Aaron to bring the first plague against Pharaoh and Egypt. You see both Moses' and Aaron's names mentioned again in the second and third plague. However, it's fascinating that Aaron's name does not always appear with the remaining plagues. Did the biblical writer simply forget to include Aaron's name? Was Aaron out of town? Or was this God's way of helping Moses to see that he didn't need Aaron's assistance like he thought he did?

God wants to work through us despite our shortcomings and failures. And, He is looking for those who will walk with Him in faithfulness and humility. Obedience to God, trust in Him, and willingness to follow where He leads trumps our own competence and talent.

"When God calls you to Himself, He will equip you with all you need to follow Him."

DANIEL IM

AM I AVAILABLE?

God longs to use our strengths and our weaknesses. Consider how God might use you by completing the following sentences.



One area of strength where I think God can use me:

One area of weakness where I feel inadequate for ministry:

One excuse I make for not letting God use me in that area:

One practical thing I will do to let God work through me in that area:

LIVE IT OUT

It's easy to approach God with a "But, what if?" or "But, what about?" posture. Consider applying the truth of this session by doing one of the following.

- » **Deal with the past.** Moses' past sins affected his outlook and posture in life. What temptations tend to come up repeatedly for you? What sins do you often commit? Ask the Lord to free you from those chains.
- » **Focus on the present.** When you wake up each morning, start your day with prayer. Ask the Lord to use you, your work, and every interaction you'll have. Offer up to Him your day and make yourself available to be used by Him.
- » **Be accountable.** Is there something you know God is calling you to do? Sharing this with a trustworthy Christ-follower and invite him or her to keep you accountable to respond in obedience.

God takes us just as we are—imperfect people with flaws, weaknesses, and all—and uses us to accomplish His plans. Put aside the tendency to compare yourself to others and step up to the tasks God has for you. **God can overrule any of our objections once we step out in faith to follow Him.**



My thoughts