

**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS**  
**Commentary by Michael Sigler**  
**November 3, 2013**

**God Calling**

Read Exodus 3:7-17

**Key verses:** “The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of... Jacob, has appeared to me. The Lord said, ‘I’ve been paying close attention to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt. I’ve decided to take you away from the harassment in Egypt’” (Exodus 3:15-17).

The call of Moses begins one of the most significant episodes in Biblical history. Through Moses’ leadership, God will deliver the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, reveal the Ten Commandments, and prepare God’s people to enter the Promised Land.

One day, while tending his father-in-law’s flocks in the Sinai desert, Moses encounters God in the burning bush. God speaks to Moses and calls him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Knowing that to obey means confronting the power of Pharaoh, Moses asks God, “Who am I to go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” (v. 11).

To Moses’ question, God gives the only answer any called person really needs to know: “I’ll be with you...” (v. 12).

Like Moses, God calls us to join Him in the redemptive work God is doing in the world. Not all are called to be pastors or missionaries, but every believer is a called person. As we understand this calling in the United Methodist Church: “All members of Christ’s universal Church are called to share in the ministry which is committed to the whole Church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, each member of the United Methodist Church is to be a servant of Christ on mission in the local and worldwide community” (*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, parag. 220).

Answering God’s call may involve anything from teaching a Sunday School class, to serving on a ministry team, to building a relationship with a co-worker with the goal of sharing Christ with her. The key is our availability and willingness for God to use us.

The story of God calling Moses shows us some important truths about how God calls each of us....

First, we see that hearing God's call requires *paying attention to God's working in our daily lives*. Moses' call came during an otherwise normal "day at the office." While working at his everyday job, "tending the flock," Moses recognized the hand of God in a burning bush and, when Moses went closer to investigate, God spoke.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote: "Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God. But only he who sees takes off his shoes. The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries." Hearing God's call involves paying attention to God's working in our daily lives.

Second, *God's call normally comes as a response to people's needs*. In Moses' life, God's call came in response to the needs of a suffering people in Egypt: "Then the Lord said, 'I've clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I've heard their cry of injustice because of their slave masters. I know about their pain. I've come down to rescue them....'" (vv. 7-8a).

If you want God to use you, but you're not sure just how or where, your call may come as you seek to "find a need and fill it, find a hurt and heal it." What needs do you see that God may be calling you to meet?

Third, *"the will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you."* When God called Moses from the burning bush, Moses immediately feared the opposition he would face. So, Moses objected to God: "Who am I to go....?" God promised, "I'll be with you...." We can be sure that when God call us, He will be with us, giving us all we need to obey the call of God in our lives.

So often we fail to respond to God's call in our lives because we feel we do not have what it takes. I am reminded of the guy who was out with his girlfriend. The moon was glistening, and he was in a romantic mood.

He looked into her eyes and said: "Susan, if I had a thousand arms, they'd all be hugging you. If I had a thousand eyes, they'd all be gazing into yours. If I had a thousand lips, they would all be kissing you."

At that, his girlfriend said: "Bill, quit complaining about what you *don't* have and start using what you *do* have!"

Are you using what you do have to serve the Lord? Are you willing to step out in obedience to God's call and believe that "the will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you"?

Every believer is a *called* person. Our great joy is to use the talents God gives us to serve Him. Moses' call speaks to us today about the call of God in our lives:

1. Hearing God's call requires us to pay attention to how God is working in our daily lives.

2. God's call normally comes as a response to people's needs. "Find a need and fill it, find a hurt and heal it."
3. "The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you." So, quit complaining about what you don't have and start using what you do have to serve the Lord!

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