

June 4-5, 2011

Pastor Tim Wood

God's Answers to our Excuses

Exodus 3-4

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" And God said, "I will be with you..." Exodus 3:11-12a
I'm calling our summer series in Exodus - Break Out. Think about this: God's chosen people are stuck - they are not free there are slaves. That can happen to any of us. But God is doing something and it will set us free! Let's do a little review - People that fear God, value God - break out! God-fearers are difference makers. God prepares us for break out. The desert is never wasted / delays are not denials / disappointments are his appointments. Today - break out requires that I quit making excuses and trust God fully! I was in a traffic jam last week. Stalled. Not going anywhere. It's frustrating. You know what's worse? Being stalled spiritually. Not making any forward progress in our spiritual life. And it boils down to this - we're stuck because we're not willing to fully trust God. This is where we find Moses. In the desert, 80 years old and he's still not doing what God wants him to do. As we review this story let me make:

Three Observations about God:

1) God has a way of getting our attention.

Moses is doing what he does everyday - watching sheep. An ordinary day turns extra-ordinary because Moses sees a bush burning and it's not being consumed. Verse 4 - when the Lord gets his attention he speaks to him. God will speak to us primarily in his word, but if that doesn't get our attention he will use our surroundings. God doesn't need a P.R. department, he doesn't need an advance team. His plan doesn't require a drum roll or crashing cymbals. He simply takes an ordinary day and makes it extra-ordinary. The key is will we stop long enough to know that God is God. THERE WILL BE NO BREAK OUT UNTIL GOD HAS OUR ATTENTION! What happens when God gets Moses' attention? He tells him he's standing on Holy Ground. Notice the place Moses is standing is holy. I always assumed the bush was holy and it is; but the verse says where Moses is standing is holy. Holy = separate. In other words, God is re-assuring his attentive shepherd that he has separated him for His use. Moses, separate yourself from your past. Moses separate yourself from your failures. Now that I have your attention, I want you to know, that I am God and I want to use you! God says to us, "you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you might declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1Peter 2:9)

2) God has a calling for which he prepares us.

Verses 7-10. God sees misery, hears crying, is concerned about suffering, comes down to rescue and wants to bring us into a good place. If you think otherwise you have believed a lie. Notice: God's calling involves Going

verse 10. God says GO! Two thirds of God is Go! What's God calling you to go to? God's call is generally Go. As we go he will Show!

3) God has answers for all our excuses...not to Go.
This is the rest of the sermon.

Excuses, and how God answers them:

Excuse #1 – I am inadequate – verses 11-12.

Moses had tried this before and failed. He feels inadequate, unqualified, he's been out of touch for 40 years. And now he's 80 years old. God's answer: I will be with you. Moses it isn't about you it's about me and I will be with you. God promises his abiding presence. That should be enough for any of us. God promises if we go he will go too, before us, behind us, above us, around us...he'll never leave. Isn't that enough?

Excuse #2 – I don't have all the answers. Verses 13-14

Suppose - what an audacious thing to say to the Almighty! Let's just suppose I decide to obey you...or go for you. WOW! Then he says, I don't really know who you are? I might get asked a question I don't have an answer to. Q- Why do we feel that we have to have all the answers? A - PRIDE! God's answer: I AM! You may not have all the answers but you will have all of ME!

Excuse #3 – What if no one listens – 4:1

God already told Moses they would listen - 3:18. Moses got caught up in the hypothetical. He was so worried about what might happen; he didn't hear what would happen. His fear of ridicule or being silly or not accepted overtook the promise of God in his life! God's answer: I will empower you! I'm going to take what's in your hand and make it powerful!

Excuse #4 – I am not talented enough. 4:10-13

God's answer is so rich. He lets Moses know that even if he couldn't speak, couldn't see, couldn't hear...God would still use him and it would be effective. A healthy body is not a requirement for God to use you! God says not only will I help you speak, I will teach you what to say. GOD ISN'T LOOKING FOR TALENTED PEOPLE - HE'S LOOKING FOR TRUSTING PEOPLE. Talent isn't an issue, trust is. God's answer: Moses you aren't talented, but I AM.

Remember these three lessons:

We can be certain of God's calling. God wants us to go for him. Does God have your attention? Do you know you're holy?

We can be confident in God's power. Whatever our excuses, God has an answer. He never calls us that he doesn't equip us. 2 Cor. 4:7- But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that his all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

We can be comfortable with God's plan. God's plan is God's plan...you don't need Aaron if you have God. *We get stuck spiritually because we are not willing to trust God fully.