**BCM Bible Study: September 16/17, 2020**

**Exodus 4: God’s Preparation and Assurance**

How did God respond to Moses’ first two statements of doubts?

**Read Exodus 4:1-9**

* The first sign involves the staff and the snake. The snake was representative of Egyptian royal authority. Knowing this, what does this sign communicate?
* The second sign involves leprosy. We will learn in Leviticus that leprosy made someone unclean, thus preventing them from participating in worship. Knowing this, what does this sign communicate?
* In the eyes of the Egyptians (and practically speaking) the Nile was their life force. Blood is a symbol of life and blood.
* Overall, what do these signs communicate about the following three people: Pharaoh/Egypt and their gods (Pharaoh was considered a god), God, Israel.
  + Have you ever experienced the extraordinary work of God in your life? How does that serve as a reminder of his comittment to you?
* In the New Testament, Jesus discourages us from looking for signs like the ones he gives to Moses. That is not to say they will not happen; they are simply not the norm. **Read Matthew 12:38-40**.
  + What does Jesus say in response to the request for a sign? What sign does he give?
  + How are the cross and resurrection of Jesus a “sign” like the ones in Exodus?

**Read Exodus 4:10-17**

* Moses presents a reasonable concern in v.10 – what is it?
  + How does God respond in verses 11-12?
  + Peter Enns comments that “It is precisely in our inability that [God’s] light shines brightest in our hearts.” This recalls a famous verse – **Read 2 Corinthians 9:8-10.**
    - In what ways do you tend to feel inadequate to be used by God?
    - How might God shine through your own inadequacies?
    - God could have accomplished his mission by grand out-of-this-world signs. Instead, he uses common things – staff, skin disease, and water. In addition, he uses an ordinary man. How is this an encouragement to you?
* For the first 4 statements of doubt, God reacts patiently with Moses, but he becomes angry here. Why? What is different about v.13?
  + Despite God’s anger, how does he respond? How do you see God’s graciousness in this?
  + What does this teach us about God’s willingness to engage with our doubts and questions?
  + Do you feel like there are any ways that you are asking God to send someone else? What is driving that desire?

Moses Goes to Egypt: **Read Exodus 4:18-23**

* This is the first mention of God hardening Pharaoh’s heart. What are your thoughts about the idea of God hardening Pharaoh’s heart?
  + Go back and **read Exodus 3:19**. In what way does this verse portray who is hardening Pharaoh’s heart?
  + In this story, what assurance does this bring to Moses and the Israelites?
  + **Read Isaiah 64:8.** Why is it important for you not to separate God’s sovereignty and the fact that he is our Father?
* God calls Israel his son. The New Testament calls us children of God. **Read Romans 8:14-17**. What does it mean that you are a child of God? Why is that significant for you?

**Read Exodus 4:24-31**

* What are some of the privileges and responsibilities that come with being God’s son or daughter?

Challenge

Take some time each day to express your unedited doubts, frustrations, hopes, or thoughts to God. Take note of any response you receive this week.