

God's Grace is With Us!

Exodus 4:1-12; Mark 9:24; Romans 8:14;

Luke 12:12

If the Lord appeared to you tonight in a dream like He did king Solomon and said, "ask for whatever you want" (1 Kings 3:1-15), what would be your request be? For some maybe you would ask for a larger bank account, for others maybe stronger and more loving ties with your family, and for others



maybe your heart's desire would be better health and longer days on this earth. But when we think about what will truly last the test of time is it not the grace of God what we need most? We

live in a world that is not our home (Hebrews 13:14-16) and in jars of clay that are easily broken (2 Corinthians 4:7) and truthfully without grace the wages of sin remain death (Romans 6:23) for who could ever pull themselves out of their depravity and ever attain the right to be called a child of the Most High God? While we say with our lips that our hearts and flesh cry out for the living God (Psalms 84:2) we tend to interpret the Lord's words, "whatever your ask shall be given unto you" (Matthew 7:7-8; John 16:23-24), as a mere blank check of greed instead of a glorious invitation to discern His will and walk the

path He has set out for us. It is easy in seasons of blessings to say, "the Lord is with me" and be willing to follow Him to green pastures but to be invited to serve in the valleys of trials and tribulations which of us would respond like the Prophet Isaiah, "here I am, send me" (6:8)? Is it not in the dreary storms of life where the genuineness of our faith is refined and proven to be of greater value than that of even gold (1 Peter 1:7)? Is it not by grace and faith that the greatest gift ever given to humanity can be obtained, adoption into God's very own family? And yet even though we firmly believe Christ atoned for our sins and we are indeed His children and one day will partake in His great banquet in heaven (Luke 14:15-23), when called to serve we tend to wear our doubts, lukewarmness, and selfishness as filthy rags of pretend righteousness rather than seeing them as giant planks of sin (Matthew 7:3-5) keeping us from drawing nearer to the Lord so that He might draw nearer to us (James 4:8)! Let's turn to Moses' call so that we might learn that thankfully even in disbelief God can take an initially unwilling, unknown, and doubtful servant like you and me and transform us into the ambassadors and priests that we were intended to be (2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Peter 2:9)!

Grace Given to Moses

As Moses tended the flock of Jethro his father-in-law (3:1) one can't help but wonder how often he thought about how dramatically his life had changed. It was not that long ago that Moses was drawn from the Nile River as a slave (1:1-22), adopted by Pharaoh's daughter (2:10) and had access to the great riches, education, philosophy, and power of Egypt. If only he

had looked the other way instead of killing that Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave (2:11) his grandfather Pharaoh would not have sought his life and he would not have needed to flee to Midian (2:15) and become a shepherd. And yet despite his grave sin in murdering another, God's grace was extended to Moses at Horeb (3:1) with a unique but humanly impossible proposal. God told him he was selected to be an emissary to be "sent to Pharaoh to bring My people the Israelites out of Egypt"



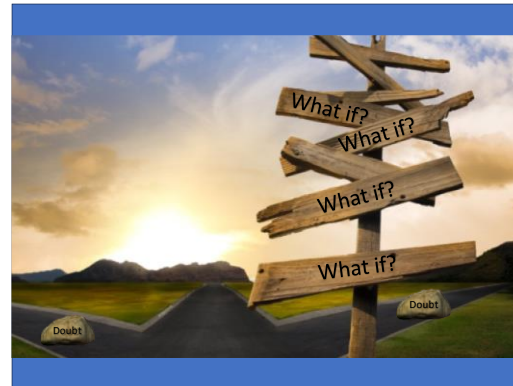
(3:10). Though while on holy ground Moses was too sacred to even look at God (3:2-6), this did not stop him from proceeding to spew out of his mouth a litany of

excuses to try to get out of his call! Though God promised He would be with Moses (3:12) and though God announced "I AM WHO I AM" (3:14) would not only free the Israelites but make the Egyptians so favourable unto them that their departing gifts would feel like plunder (3:21-22); Moses refused to believe that the Israelites would believe he was sent by God (4:1), a mere shepherd and a nobody! Even when God showed Moses he had been granted the ability to do miraculous signs, such as turning a staff into a snake (4:3), making his hand change from leprous and back to healthy again (4:6-7), and the ability to turn the Nile water into blood (4:8-9); Moses still felt inadequate to fulfill the call of God because his tongue was not able to speak eloquently (4:10)! To this God replied that the Creator of his tongue would

Himself teach him what to say (4:12). By God's grace He did not give up on His servant and once Moses replaced his excuses with faith; Moses arose with the staff of God in his hand and served (4:20)!

The Hurdle of Doubt

Moses' hurdle of doubt when called to serve is still experienced by many born again Christians today. Doubt is the crucible in which holy service is tossed away in the wind, never to be experienced or realized in one's life. Those who do not seek first the kingdom of God (6:33) spend their life plagued and haunted by the daunting question, "what if?" How often do we



look back upon major life decisions only to torture ourselves with the endless possible decisions we could have made and how other decisions might have changed our current circumstances? For instance, what if I had

chosen another career would I have been more successful? What if I had exercised more when younger would my health now be better? What if I invested wiser and a greater sum of money in my youth would I now be rich? What if I chose more time to be with my family instead of working so much, would my family visit me more often? The question, "what if" not only haunts the

past but also the present as well. What if I say “Yes” to God’s call and fail? What if the world pokes fun at me for taking on the impossible tasks that God has assigned me? What if I speak the wrong words, think the wrong thoughts, and/or do evil deeds that point away from rather than towards God the Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16)?

To throw off the shackles doubt that so easily entangles, we must have “confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1)! Doubt releases its debilitating hold on our lives when, like the father of the boy possessed by an impure spirit, we change our attitudes from “if You Lord can do anything” to “I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief” (Mark 9:22, 24)! Ever since childhood the dad searched for a human cure for his child when only prayer and the power of God could kick out such a powerful demon. When we repeatedly try to get kingdom



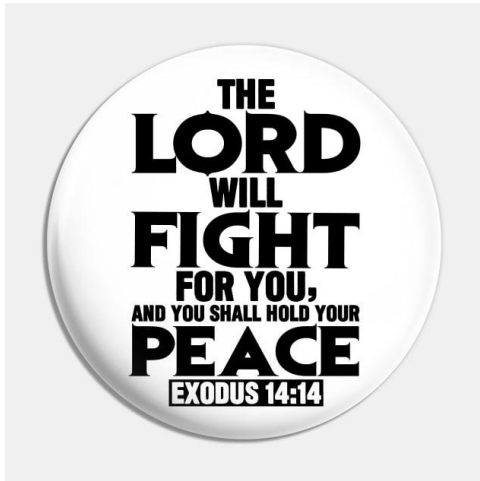
results without the aid of the King then failure and doubt is all we can expect to accomplish. While for some doubt has been planted in their hearts by repeated failures, for others doubt comes from not knowing their true value and potential as a child of God! When many believers review their standing in society and value themselves according to the worldly “all for me” focused system; they falsely conclude that since they cannot

accomplish great things in this world, they cannot do so in God’s kingdom either! But the Bible says otherwise! While we are far from much when we are called, we must not forget that God uses the weak to shame the strong so that our service might shine brightly of His reverence and power (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)! The only way to avoid being plagued by the “what ifs” of life is to ask in accordance with God’s will and then serve in His kingdom in the manner He was preordained for you (1 John 5:14-15). The goal of living one’s life worthy of the Gospel message cannot be accomplished through one’s effort, abilities, or even being a good decision maker but instead like Moses can only be accomplished through a total surrender of one’s heart and life to Christ who alone enables one to do more than we could ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20)!

God is for Us!

Doubt cannot reign in our hearts in the face of the truth that God is for us! Though none of us were righteous not even one (Romans 3:10-20) did not God send His one and only Son Jesus to pay the price for our sins upon the cross (John 3:16)? Though we were indifferent and often dare I say defiant towards God did he not send the beautiful feet of one of His servants to preach to us the Good News (Romans 10:14-15)? How many miracles must God do in our lives before we believe that He truly is sovereign over all things seen and unseen (Colossians 1:16)? In the face of the most difficult opponents to the faith can we not hear the reassuring words of God to Moses when the Egyptians had them cornered at the Red Sea, “the Lord will fight for you; you need only stand still” (Exodus 14:14)? Though the Devil

roars like a lion (1 Peter 5:8), constantly shooting his fiery darts of evil at us (Ephesians 6:16), may we stand firm in faith knowing that the “Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7)! The Lord who saved His people from Pharaoh’s cruel grasp (Exodus 7-11), Daniel from the lion’s den (Daniel 6), gave David victory over Goliath (1 Samuel 17), sent an angel of the



Lord to free Peter from Herod’s prison (Acts 12), and put to death 185,000 of the Assyrian camp (2 Kings 19); not only shows up in the darkest of our valleys but heals the broken-hearted, binds up their wounds (Psalms 147:2) and YES grants their heart’s desire when it conforms to His will!

After just three miracles Moses put his excuses away, how many miracles must He perform in your life before you are willing to pray to Him, help me with my unbelief? Since God is for us who could ever be against us (Romans 8:31)? Be “confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6)! So, seek His will and not only will the “what ifs” disappear but whatever you ask will be given unto you!

The Washing and Cleansing

Before I finish today’s sermon lets just take a quick moment and deal with the excuse that keeps most believers from serving God. We live in a fallen world filled with who Apostle Paul called, “gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, boastful, evil, and without understanding, fidelity, love or mercy” (Romans 1:30-31). Our light shines brightest in utter darkness not only as a beacon of hope of what those created in



God’s image (Genesis 1:27) are meant to be but also as a constant reminder that the goats are about to be casted in eternal hell “prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew

25:41). While the fallen will not approach the light in fear that their evil deeds will be exposed (John 3:20), they are more than willing to seek and expose any specks in the believer’s eyes with the hope that their message might be drowned out in a sea of hypocrisy! Sin or the lack of righteousness is the number one excuse most believers give as to why they should not serve a holy God. The cry to have one’s heart searched for offensive, unrighteous, selfish, depraved thoughts words or deeds was not shouted by king David to find an excuse to not serve but as the cry of a humble person looking for his Master’s grace so that he might be forgiven, purified like refiners fire, and placed upon the solid rock of his salvation so that he might serve his Lord,

Saviour, and King with a pure heart! To say the presence of sin in one's life nulls out the call to serve is either a sinful declaration that one chooses unrighteousness like a badge of honor than holy living, or a foolish declaration that Christ's blood does not cleanse confessed sins!

Conclusion

If the Lord were to appear to you tonight and say, "ask for whatever you want," what would your response be? Would you have the courage to humbly and yet boldly be like the prophet



Isaiah, and cry out, "here I am, send me?" Since we live in a fallen world as jars of clay this request is truly one of asking to receive grace from the Potter to never stop molding us the clay. This of course would mean we would have to ask God to help us throw off the doubts, lukewarmness and selfishness that we often wear as badges of honor and humbly submit the lives we cannot keep over to He who alone can purify and enable we the "ordinary and weak" to

accomplish more than we could ever ask or imagine. What keeps us from fulfilling the call of the Lord is doubt which for many believers has become the crucible in which holy service is tossed to the wind, never to be realized in and through our lives. To keep from being paralyzed by regret by the never ending "what ifs" of life we must

change our attitudes from "if you can do anything with me Lord" to "whatever I ask in Your name and will, I know this will happen." It was by God's grace and through our faith in the atoning sacrifice of His Son that we were saved. It is also by God's grace that He chooses to take us the weak to shame the strong by performing the miraculous in and through our lives. While choosing to accept God's grace through humble service will invite many fiery darts from the devil and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms, we only need to stand still and let God fight and win the victory for us! And while each of us might be tempted to say "I am not worthy" may we not use this as an excuse to not serve but an invitation to confess our sins and be cleansed from all unrighteousness so that our deeds assisted by His grace might produce much fruit in His kingdom, for His honor and glory. Thankfully God's grace is always with us!