



Series: Exodus: Out of Egypt

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Text: Exodus 4

Title: Self-Focus vs. God-Focus

Intro:

- what a blessing it's been to go through exodus so far. And to be here at Mercy, go ahead and open up your Bibles to Exodus 4 and as you turn there... *brief intro myself* ***THEN PRAY***
- It is very true that the most important thing in our lives is what we believe about God.
- Last week Pastor Spence said the powerful statement that God is... fire, purifying, Holy. I would even argue that the central theme of the book of Exodus is God's holiness. We discussed the all too familiar story of the burning bush where we see God finally reveal Himself to Moses and he tells Moses His name. When Moses approaches the ground God says to remove his sandals because Moses was entering holy ground. The ground and the bush were insignificant until they were approached by the presence of God.

- All throughout scripture we see this same miracle take place in the hearts of mere man. On our own we are not Holy, and so when we encounter God face to face, that relationship calls us to things that would be impossible on our own. And even seem contradictory to our nature
- **T1** So that brings us here to where we left off last week in Exodus 4 where God is then laying out the plan that He designed specifically for Moses
- Now you might be asking yourself, how could we see a person who gets a direct revelation from God about the purpose that he was created to do and yet argue with the ultimate creator of the universe who rules and reigns on His throne and does as He pleases?
- **Answer: we struggle with the calling of God because the nature of God.** We must be careful to not get prideful in thinking that we would be so quick to accept a task that God called us to just because it was a direct revelation. I would argue that not only do we struggle in everyday tasks that are clearly painted out in scripture, and shoot, we wouldn't even recognize our savior if He walked in this room right now because we have such a natural tendency to focus on self.
- what I want us to be thinking about as we dive into Exodus 4 today, is as I studied this passage what



God revealed to me was that **Moses agreed with God's mission, but he was doubting his own assignment as it relates to God's plan. For a few different reasons:**

- 1. **Moses was self-focused and so it led him to doubt**
- 2. **Had Moses placed his confidence in what God was trying to show him, he would have been more confident in the calling**
- 3. **God's provision always prevails**
- He gave Moses and assignment, when Moses doubted, God gracefully offers him 4 means of provision to help equip him to fulfill the assignment that he was given. Because we serve a God who will call us to accomplish things that are impossible on our own, but He always subsequently equips us to carry out His will.
- I believe that as we dive into this text we can resonate with Moses as he looks at his calling head on. I'm confident that as believers we'll be able to learn from the places that Moses erred and reevaluate our own walks with Jesus.
- And if you're a non-believer in this room, and you hear us singing all these songs about a faithful being who always fulfills His promises, that hopefully you can see why He's worthy of not only our praise, but our trust as well.

4:1-5 Moses answered, "What if they won't believe me and will not obey me but say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?'"

² The Lord asked him, "What is that in your hand?"
"A staff," he replied.

³ "Throw it on the ground," he said. So, Moses threw it on the ground, it became a snake, and he ran from it. ⁴ The Lord told Moses, "Stretch out your hand and grab it by the tail." So, he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand. ⁵ "This will take place," he continued, "so that they will believe that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

[Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Ex 4:1–5.

- Some of ya'll are like, Gaven, I can relate to Moses perfectly fine so far because and I must be EXTRA biblical because I would have run from the snake too!
- Symbolism of staff Egyptian would have recognized meant=authority, snake Egyptians would have recognized a popular but not powerful African deity who took the form of a snake



- God shows sovereignty over nature and reality but also that He is more powerful than anything they would have recognized as a deity. Because YHWH is the one true living God

⁶In addition the Lord said to him, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” So, he put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out, his hand was diseased, resembling snow. ⁷“Put your hand back inside your cloak,” he said. So, he put his hand back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, it had again become like the rest of his skin.

[Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Ex 4:6–7.

- for those of us who didn't grow up in a household with a black mom, she used to tell us growing up... little did I know she was carrying out biblical miracles as a form of discipline. One time my oldest brother was talking back, and I thought she was gonna carry out the part about the blood of the lamb and the final plague on him, but let's not get too far ahead of the story.

⁸“If they will not believe you and will not respond to the evidence of the first sign, they may believe the evidence of the second sign. ⁹And if they don't believe even these two signs or listen to what you say, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the Nile will become blood on the ground.”

[Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Ex 4:8–9.

- POINT 1 Self focus inevitably leads to self-doubt 1-9

- God displayed His power through Moses to communicate a message
- We know we can trust God because He shows us what He is capable of
- The entire message of the Bible is God displaying his power through either miracles or His creation.
- Even core tasks ` like the great commission, the miracle of salvation, the reason any of us is sitting in this room because we're drawn by the Holy Spirit, is impossible without God.
- Some of us used to sin like nobody's businesses without any kind of conviction, and idk about yall but I was good at it! But now we as believers have a different relationship with our sin as walk as a redeemed people who hate the things that God



hates, and we love the things that God loves and that within itself is a miracle of God's power.

- One of my mentors used to tell me early on in my discipleship journey, that selfishness is the root of all our sin. We are either constantly making decisions throughout our day because we're trying to satisfy a selfish desire, or we, like Moses are diverting our attention away from where God is calling us to look.
- Looking at this text begs us to ask the question, are we God focused or are we self-focused?

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."

Christian Standard Bible (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Ex 4:10–12.

Exodus 4:10-12

2. God focus creates confidence in Gods calling¹⁰⁻¹²

- We see God's character being displayed here in that when we place limitations, a confidence in God helps us accomplish his assignments. We also see this same train of thought in John 9
- John 9:1-3 As he was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," Jesus answered. "This came about so that God's works might be displayed in him."
- *Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Jn 9:1–3.
- So, this scripture along with Exodus 4 single handedly destroys the misconception that every time we have something wrong with us that we'd rather fix, it isn't always punishment.
- God answered Moses's insecurities and I can bet He has an answer for yours too. Every generation is commissioned by God to carry out what He's called us to do. Not by our own power but due to faithfulness in Him. Idk about yall. But I don't want to be the one generation of believers that looks at God and says. But God my vision. God my speech. But God my gifts aren't good enough. My past is too dark? My finances are too shallow? My trauma is too crippling? My family did so much damage to me and still does to this day? My spouse and I can't



get on the same page, and I feel like they're holding me back? But God I'm not as good as this person. As faithful as that person. Not saying we don't need help at times. Or not even that it's not ok to ask God questions. But we can't let them be excuses forever

- We see that in the context of John 9 that certain people have certain ailments or defects that God is more than able to put on display for His glory.
- God never wastes a good opportunity in our lives to suffer for His glory
- Even more specifically, God pulls out the ultimate uno draw 4 wildcard in how He responds to Moses.
- Moses acts as if God is up there like I'm only the one supreme author of life itself who heard the cries of your people for generations, gave your life through a baby boy genocide, and raised you up in pharaohs house, through a statistical anomaly just that you'd even have an audience with arguably the most powerful ruler in existence at that time period, but I overlooked the fact that you had a speech impediment, my bad.
- Not to mention, Moses was trippin about a speech impediment? Bro, you killed somebody a few chapters ago. You have bigger fish to worry about fam.
- God chose Moses to fulfill this purpose fully aware of his plight, and He displays that in the way He orchestrated your life as well. God has a calling for you too.
- And through that calling, God is sovereign over our ailments, restrictions, limitations that we walk with, and He created you with them when he knitted you together in your mother's womb s/o to Psalm 139
- God's purpose will sometimes call us beyond our capabilities only to stare our insecurities in the face to the point where the only plausible explanation is that God carried us.
- And to that I say thank God because as followers of Jesus we shouldn't want to think for a second that we're operating in our own power in any aspect of our lives
- If you're new to Mercy or maybe you've been coming for a while, and you might be sitting on the sidelines wondering how can start this journey?
- It doesn't always start with a burning bush moment. Sometimes it's as simple as finding out what your next step is. Here at Mercy, we not only help people take that next step closer to Jesus, but we do that by making disciples who love God, love their neighbor and love our world.
- For starters I'd recommend getting plugged into biblical community through our community groups.



And 2 we have plenty of needs right now in parking, next steps, and children's that haven't been the same since covid came and gave us the most awkward and long spring break that we didn't sign up for.

- We believe that as you serve in different areas in our church it's about way more than just showing up to do a task, but to help develop disciples of Jesus and grow them into leaders. We're hosting a short event called starting point immediately following the service today where you can hang around and learn more about how to get involved in being a part of Mercy church. And as you make the effort to step out in faith, God will over time reveal Himself to you.
- Taking a picture that might seem a bit fuzzy at the moment and helping make it more clear

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."

- I feel like we should pay special attention to places in scripture where God starts asking people questions that He already knows the answer to. There's usually a reason

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."

[Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Ex 4:13–17.

3. God's provision always prevails

¹ Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

² It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes!

³ It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion!

For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

[The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 133:1–3.



- I could preach a whole sermon on this but for the sake of time I'll keep it simple, not only does this verse reference Aaron by name, when brothers dwell in unity it's good and pleasant because back then it was hard for families to grow and be near one another due to limited resources, so when they could dwell together, it was like oil, a representation of God's presence, rich and satisfying
- And like dew at the top of a mountain where water may be scarce for some forms of life, unity can be the provision God gives us in places where it seems like there isn't any at all.
- As the 4th and final provision God gives Moses' assistance through Aaron. He shows us he's not some sadistic puppet master who like to watch us squirm
- In this instance I almost see God as a coach who not only empowers but He encourages.
- God's anger was kindled against Moses more than likely out of frustration, but even in God's

frustration, there is still provision. Now what I'm not saying is to take this for granted, and to keep walking in disobedience when God is calling you to do something, but here we see God doesn't even show selfish frustration like we do. Even in God's anger and hatred of sin, He sends Jesus to us to make a way for us to have right relationship with Him.

- *Plug for Proven Men All these men who are stuck between a rock and a hard place where they are faced with either walking in God's will for their lives or in disobedience and so they've decided to take up arms and go to war for their marriages, their children, their hearts that can so easily be swayed by the desires of the flesh. And one story stuck out to me from one of the graduates. He said even though God saved him at an early age in high school, for the first time as an
- we're about to take communion