

Romans 15:4

Sunday 2/23/2025

What a blessing to be here. It is a tremendous blessing to be here, and it is an extremely humbling experience, everything that you people have bestowed upon us. I stand before you humbled and overwhelmed to a great extreme. Bob has always been a mentor to me, somebody I always looked up to, someone that I always loved, and somebody that was always kind and giving to me even when he barely knew me. So I hold him in high respect. I have learned a lot from him, and thanks be to Bob, for I am where I am today. I was excited about coming out here to preach. As I said, it is a very humbling experience to be before you and to watch everything that is happening.

Your love is without dissimulation. The love of God has been shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you. You have demonstrated the love of Christ in such a unique way. Jamie, Danny, just everyone, Bob, and just everybody in such a unique way. I praise God for that, that God would use you to express His love to a sinner like me who is unworthy.

Before I preach, a couple of things I just want to get off my mind. As I was watching everybody giving and serving, Jamie with the gift of hospitality and Danny with the gift of hospitality, a scripture came to my mind: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles."

We came in, it was about 10:30 the other night, and I am tired, I am ready to crash, I am ready to go to bed, and Jamie is down there buzzing around. She goes, "You want some iced tea?" I am like, "Iced tea?" She goes, "It's good, you have to have some iced tea." Then her and Sarah were getting ready to cook food. I am like, "You guys are going to cook at 10:30 at night?" And they were all excited and all wound up, and they were getting ready to cook at 10:30 at night.

As time goes on, I am upstairs, nodding off, going to sleep, and I smell something really good. It kind of taps me on the nose like the old cartoons and woke me up to smell, and I am following the aroma downstairs. I get into the kitchen, and there is Jamie and Sarah flying around like eagles. I am like, "Wait a second." I ran back upstairs and jumped in bed. I did not know what to do. I did not know what they had going on, Brother Bob.

I was moved by it because of their hospitality, and the Spirit of God did give them a surge of energy because they were waiting on the Lord. That is a tremendous thing. They were waiting on the Lord and just serving us, and God gave them a surge and a burst of energy that was overwhelming.

I. What Is In Your Hand?

This morning, I want to talk to you about who God uses and how God uses. There are certain people that God's hand was upon in the Word of God, and God would use these men and these women in a great fashion. They became God's people. As they became God's people, none of them were perfect, but God's hand was upon them.

When you think about certain individuals that God used, there was always something in their hand. So my question to you this morning is, you can store this in the back of your head: What is in your hand? Not what is in your wallet, but what is in your hand? What are you holding? What are you clutching? What are you grasping? What are you working with? What do you do with the works of your hands? What abilities or talents do you possess in your life?

If you could think about this, we are going to talk about Moses' rod or his staff. We are going to talk about David's sling, and we are going to talk about Shamgar's ox goad. Then we are going to talk about Samson's jawbone.

The question is, what is in your hand that could bring honor and glory to God? What has God placed in your trust? What has God put for you in a line of work or whatever it may be? But what is in your hand that can be used for the very glory of God?

Each one of these individuals had something that was in their hand, and they used it for the glory of God. They used it for the redemption and the deliverance of God's people. They used it as something that God has entrusted with them and that God has empowered in their life for the very glory of God.

Everything we do is for the glory of God. No matter where we go, no matter what we do, it is all for the glory of God. You may have a pen in your hand. You may have a computer, a wrench, a ball, a dog leash, a hammer, a tool, a gun, an instrument, a steering wheel, a stethoscope, a pair of scissors, or even a pickleball paddle can be used for the glory of God.

The question is, how is God going to use me, and how is God going to use you? I think that a lot of times we think that God only uses us in a certain area, but you have to realize God uses who you are, where you are, and whatever you have in your hand; that can be for the very glory of God. We need to realize that sometimes we become narrow-minded in the sense of Christianity and what God has called us to do, and we forget that God can use you at any moment, at any time, at any second. You have to just be aware of your circumstances and the things around you.

II. The Foundation of Scripture and Ministry

As we prepare for this study, I want you to turn to the book of Romans chapter 15 and verse 4.

Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

So everything that was written in the Old Testament is written for our learning. They were written for our learning and our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

We all know 2 Timothy 3:16. Let us turn there.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

So the Bible teaches you and I to do what God has called us to do, to perform how God wants us to perform. The Word of God is a living thing. God literally takes the Word of God, and He moves through the essence of the Word of God to give you comprehension and understanding of His will and His Word, what He wants in your life.

Now keep those verses in the back of your mind, and I want you to turn to Matthew 4 and verse 18.

Matthew 4:18-19 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Here Jesus says, He is walking by the Sea of Galilee, and these guys are bringing that net up and dropping the net. Jesus gives them a metaphor or an illustration. He says, "Guys, if you follow Me, I am going to use your hands no longer to fish for fish, but I am going to use your hands to fish for the glory of God, and you will be fishers of men." You will bring people to an understanding of who I am. So Jesus uses this illustration. He uses this metaphor.

Now if you would turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 3. I have to lay this groundwork so you can understand where I am coming from.

2 Corinthians 3:4-6 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Whose our sufficiency of? It is God. We are not sufficient within our own power, within our own strength. Moses could not do what he did without God's strength. David could not do what he did without God's strength. Shamgar could not do what he did without God's strength. Samson could not do what he did without God's strength. Our sufficiency is totally in Christ. Our dependency and our sufficiency is in the Lord Jesus Christ and Him only.

We have no might within this flesh. Our ability to do what God has called us to do, it comes from the Holy Spirit of God, and it comes from a relationship with that book. Outside of that, we cannot do anything.

It says in verse 6, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament." God has made you an able minister. There are some people that do not realize that they have the ability to do what God has called them to do. You may doubt, you may have been filled up with fear or confusion and not knowing what God has you to do. But let me tell you something, you have a book that is going to show you that you have the power of God in your life to do what God has called you to do and to perform what God has called you to perform and to do what God wants you to do. You have that ability and you have that power. Just like Moses, just like David, just like Shamgar, just like Samson, you have that power. You have that ability within yourself, and whatever is in your hands, whatever you can reach, whatever you can touch, whatever you do, that is your ministry. We have to understand how this works. That is your ministry.

III. The Purpose of Ministry: Deliverance

All of these characters before us, every single one of them—Moses, David, Shamgar, Samson—all of these characters before us give us great illustrations. They give us great tools to learn from.

If you were to think about it, what was Moses doing? Moses was bringing deliverance and redemption to the people of Israel. He was bringing them out of Egypt. As long as they were in Egypt, they did not know God. As long as they were in Egypt, they were a picture of a people being lost and in bondage and in sin and under the control of the devil himself. As long as they were in Egypt, they were not worshipping God. As long as they were in Egypt, they were making no sacrifices.

So what did Moses do? Moses comes under the power and the anointing of Almighty God, and he brings the people out so they can know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is what this is all about. There are people in this world who do not know God. Our responsibility is to bring them through so they can have an understanding of what it means to know God, so they can have an understanding of what it means to worship God, so they can have an understanding of what it means to serve the living God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Each and every one of these characters, when you think about David and Shamgar and Samson, what were they doing? They were bringing deliverance over the Philistines. So they had this responsibility to take God's people and to deliver them from oppression, from bondage, from the burden of the Philistines. That was their responsibility.

Every person in this world who does not know Christ is in bondage, and they are being oppressed by this world. God does not need us, but God wants to use you and me to bring those people to liberty, to bring those people to redemption, to bring those people to freedom, to bring those people to a point where they could serve the living God.

Now when we go on and we begin to think about how we lay the groundwork for this message, I want you to turn, if you would, to 2 Timothy chapter 2. Think in the back of your mind as we make the spiritual application from the Old Testament. The Philistines had come in, and when the nation of Israel was going astray from God, God would bring a nation in to oppress them. God would bring a nation in to bring them into captivity, and they would become the servants of them, the Philistines. So we have a responsibility.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

He says, "You, there are people out there that oppress themselves." They oppress themselves with drugs and alcohol and immorality and corruption. There are people in this world who are living in this lost world. They are under such a condition of oppression; they do not even know it. Their lives are discontent. Their lives have no purpose and no meaning and no value. Why? Because they oppress themselves.

If you understand what those Philistines were doing back in the Old Testament, they were bringing God's people under oppression. That is a picture of the world. The world will oppress you. The world is not going to give you freedom. The world is not going to give you liberty. The world is not going to give you a connection with the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. The world wants to drag you away. That is what it wants to do. It wants to oppress you.

But notice what it says: "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." You have to realize that the devil has people entrapped and enslaved. That is where we come along. What do we do? We are to set the captives free.

This is all about ministry. This is about you taking somebody who is a slave to this world, who is a slave to the devil, who is a slave to drugs and alcohol and perversion and pornography. They become a slave. They have been trapped by the devil, maybe in a religious belief, maybe in a traditional belief, maybe in some sort of form of just confusion and immorality and perversion. They are entrapped, and they have been ensnared by the devil. We need to come and set those people free.

Look at Luke 4:18, when Jesus starts His ministry. Jesus goes into the temple, and this is what He reads.

Luke 4:18-19 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

That is the ministry of discipleship. That is the ministry of reconciliation, is that we can bring healing to the brokenhearted. And it says to preach deliverance to the captives. You see that? And the recovering of the sight to the blind and to set at liberty them that are bruised.

When you are preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, you are preaching deliverance. You are taking people and bringing them to an understanding of who God is, and they are repenting, and they are being set free from the burdens of this world, from the trials of sin and the tragedies that everything in this world has. To preach deliverance to the captives. There are people out there in this world. They are enslaved to the world. They are enslaved to religion, to tradition, even to education. They are enslaved to it. Their mind does not know Christ. Their will does not understand God. They have been enslaved by this world. Just like the Philistines enslaved God's people, and just like Pharaoh had God's people enslaved. He had them. They needed to be delivered.

But it says Jesus said He came to preach deliverance to the captives and the recovering of the sight to the blind. He says, "Hey, I came to give people physical sight." But what does it say? The god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them. We have people all around us, and I am sure everybody in this

room, you have family members that are completely blinded to the truth of the Word of God, and we need to pray that the eyes of their understanding will be enlightened by the Spirit of God.

The devil has people blinded all of this world. The devil has Christians blinded. He has them blinded to the truth of the authority of that King James Bible. If that prophet be deceived, I the Lord has deceived that prophet. We live in a time when God Himself has put a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets. It works like this: the people did not want the truth. What did God do? He rolls up the false prophet, and it says, "I will put a lying spirit in the mouth of that prophet." And when that prophet has been deceived, I the Lord has deceived him. God has deceived them.

There are people here that are blind to the truth of the King James Bible. They are blind to Jesus Christ. The god of this world (small g) has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them. What are we to do? We are to bring people into the light of Jesus Christ. This is the ministry. This is what we are looking towards.

IV. Four Qualities God Uses

Now, I am going to give you four definitions. We are going to talk about:

1. The Humble
2. The Available
3. The Pliable
4. The Adaptable

We are going to look at Moses as the humble.

The Humble: Marked by meekness or modesty in behavior, attitude, or spirit; not arrogant or prideful.

Then we are going to talk about the available. David was the available.

The Available: Able to be used or obtained; be at someone's disposal.

So if you are going to be involved in ministry, you need to be humble. You need to be available. You need to be pliable. Now, Shamgar is going to show us the one who is pliable.

The Pliable: Easy to be modified, easy to work with; flexible and easy to mold and easy to shape.

There are some Christians, Brother Bob, they are just not easy to work with. You need to be easy to work with. Rob and I were talking, and we were saying we would rather have somebody come into our church who has never been saved and get saved, and we can start them out from scratch. Then we build them up because they are pliable. But when you get other people walking in that door who have been churched, that is when you run into problems. They come in, they are not humble, they are not available, and most of the times, by all means, they will not be pliable. That is Shamgar, the pliable.

Then we are going to talk about Samson, the adaptable.

The Adaptable: Able to adjust to new conditions; able to adjust oneself to ready and different conditions.

In other words, when you become adaptable in ministry, that means that you can just go on a whim, and you can get good results just because you are adaptable in your witness, you are adaptable in your soul winning, you are adaptable in what you are doing for God. But all of these have to consist together. You have to be humble, you have to be available, you have to be pliable, and by all means, you have to be adaptable in ministry. These are the people that God uses.

So we are going to go back to the Old Testament now, and we are going to look at each one of these individuals, and we are going to see how this works. If you are not humble, you will not be available, and if you are not available, you will not be pliable, and if you are not pliable, you will not be adaptable. The foundation for ministry is humility.

There are some people, Brother Bob, after they have been saved for two, three years, they think they know everything. They read through the Bible maybe one, two, three times, and they think they have got the church figured out, and they lose that sense of humility. Now Moses represents to you and I that humility. We are going to see it in just a minute, but I want to make a point before we get into this because this is very important. Just because you have been saved for years, do not ever lose that sense of humility.

Let me explain to you how it works. When you met Christ, the day you were born again, you were ushered into the presence and the power of Almighty God, and you were overwhelmed with God's glory. You were overwhelmed with the Holy Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God revealed to you who and what you were, and you were humbled under the mighty hand of God. But you know what happens after a while? You forget that. You start to pat yourself on the back, "Look at my ministry, look what I have done over here, look what I have done here." Let me tell you something, God will remove His hand from you. You have to remain humble under the mighty hand of God. There is always a deep sense of inadequacy. There is always a way about you that you feel inadequate. Those are the people that God will use.

So each one of these men, the ultimate goal was for them to bring honor and glory to God, was it not? Turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 10.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

I want you to think about that. No matter what you do in this life, no matter what you put your hands to, no matter what you do, it should be for the very glory of God. Now there are some things in this world you cannot do for the glory of God. If you are going to do it, you are going to do it for the glory of God. You cannot smoke a joint for the glory of God. You cannot start drinking beer for the glory of God. You cannot live an immoral life for the glory of God. If we are going to do something, it has to be for the very glory of Almighty God. That is when we come into service for the Christ Holy God, and we do what God has called us to do. Whatever we do, whatever we eat, whatever we drink, it says, "Whatever you do, do for the glory of God."

Now turn to 1 Peter chapter 4 and verse 11.

1 Peter 4:11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever.

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. Could you imagine if we all spoke like that? Imagine this, everything you do, you talk in Scripture. Husbands and wives, they talk in Scripture. Every time you communicate, you communicate with the living Word of God under the anointing of the Spirit of God. That your speech is controlled by the Word of God. It says here, "If any man speak, let him speak as be the oracles of God." We are to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ. Therefore our words should match.

"If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth." If you are going to minister, you do it to the ability that God has given to you. "That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever." We are the servants of God. Ultimately, we are to bring glory to God in everything we do, and how you live, how you act, how you interact with people, that is to bring honor and glory to God.

You are God's love channel, and I have seen that and I have experienced it this weekend where the people, everything they were doing, it was for the glory of God, and they were intervening, and they became God's love channel where the love of God was being shed abroad into their hearts, into our lives. That is true ministry. True ministry is not just coming to church. It is how you reflect the light of the glorious gospel into the lives of other people. It is how you impact other people. Ministry is people. It is the difference that you and I can make. Why? Because we want to glorify God. I want Jesus Christ to be manifest in my mortal flesh. That Christ will be manifest in you, in your mortal flesh, wherever you go, whatever you do, however you talk, however you interact with other people, that Jesus Christ will be manifest in you, in every aspect of your life.

So when we think about this, let us just talk about this just for a minute now. So now we have Moses with his rod. God comes up to Moses, and He is like, "What is that in your hand?" We know the story. We will turn there in just a minute, but Moses' rod was not the power. The power was in God, but God chose to use what was in Moses' hand. Because it was something that Moses had. It was something that he was familiar with. It was something that he used on a regular basis to watch those sheep, to walk as a walking stick, maybe to defend the wolves and the coyotes, but it was something that Moses had in his hand, and that is what God uses in your life. It is something that is a part of you. It is something that you work with. It is something that is in your clutch, that is in your grips. It is something that God has entrusted you. That is your ministry, and that is your tool that God has given you.

Sometimes we think that the Word of God is our only tool. Yes, that is our primary tool. But ultimately, you should be able to use ministry in every aspect of your life. You should be able to use it in every aspect. You think about David's sling. We think about David's sling. He has that sling, and he uses it, and the power was not in the sling. The power was in David's faith. We think about Shamgar's ox goad. The power of God was not in the ox goad. The power of God was in these men who walked by faith and trusted God. Each and every one of them, stay with

me, had a connection with the true God. That is where the power resides. The closer you are to God, the stronger you become. The further you are from God, the weaker you become spiritually, and you see that in the life of Samson.

But Samson, I mean, I cannot wait to get to Samson, and we are going to look at him in a completely different light, but Samson's jawbone. I mean, of all things that God uses. He is out there, he is getting ready, he just reaches down, he picks up that jawbone. He is innovative, and he is creative. These are the people who God uses.

V. Moses: The Humble

Let us look at Exodus chapter 3, in verse 1. First, we are going to look at the humble, which is Moses. Moses always had a deep sense of humility. He had a deep sense of inadequacy, which brought him to a point of total dependency. He has a deep sense of inadequacy. He has a deep sense of humility, which brought him to a point of dependability completely on God. Moses knew that he could not do anything without the power of God.

Let me tell you something. You better realize that you cannot do anything without Christ. You cannot do anything without prayer. You cannot do anything without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God. You cannot do what God has called you to do without the living Word of God that empowers you and strengthens you. If you are going to be involved in ministry, you need to do and to trust what God is doing. Where is it going to be? It is going to be through humility. You are going to always have a deep sense of inadequacy. You are always going to have it. Why? Because that brings you to a point of total dependency upon God that your sufficiency is not of yourselves. It is the sufficiency of God who has made us able ministers.

Exodus 3:1-8 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

We know that that bush is a picture of the nation of Israel and God preserving them and protecting them, but let us look at this in a practical sense. Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight why the bush is not burned." When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see,

God called him out of the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses." And he said, "Here am I." And He said, "Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place where thou standest is holy ground." "Moreover, He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face.

This is a beautiful illustration. You want to know what happens? Moses does not know God at this point. You know what he does? He just runs and hides from God. Kind of like Adam and Eve when they sinned and broke God's law. What did they do? They hid themselves. Before you come to know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, you hide your face from Him. Then later on, as Moses' relationship evolves with God, what does Moses want to do? "God, show me Your face." He is like, "God, show me Your glory. Show me Your glory." Moses is hiding his face. Now, Moses, as his relationship with God evolves, he wants to see the glory of God.

When you come to church, you want to see the glory of God. You want to see the hand of God. You want to see the power of God. You want to feel the presence of Almighty God. Then what happened? We know the story. Moses gets to God face to face. And what happens? Moses' face shone. And what did he reflect? The glory of God. When you have been with Jesus, with true humility, you will reflect the light of Jesus Christ. You will reflect God in all of His beauty, how you interact with people, how you minister to people, how you communicate with people. You are reflecting the very glory of God. This is why when somebody cuts you off, do not act like a jerk. You are supposed to reflect the glory of God. Not looking at that person and going, "You blankety blank blank." No, no, what am I supposed to do? Whatever I do, wherever I go, I want my face to emulate the very glory of Almighty God, just like Moses.

You might be here this morning hiding your face from God. The old expression is, "You can run, but you cannot hide." Let me tell you something. God is looking upon you to reveal Himself to you and to reveal His glory to you.

Exodus 3:5-7 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

We know the Bible says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Let me tell you something. Moses was the meekest man on the earth. Why? It is because he was in the presence of God. When you get in the presence of God, you have no alternative but to be humble. There is no room for pride in a church. There is no room for it. We know God hates a proud look.

"And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people." That is a picture of the lost world. That is a picture of people who have never come to know Christ. They are under affliction by the devil and the taskmaster of this world. "I have surely seen the affliction of my people, which were in Egypt, and have heard their cry." Notice that. He heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters. "For I know their sorrows." God knows every sorrow that a lost man is facing. Every man that has gone through trials and tribulations and sorrow, God knows it. And God will

allow those trials. He will allow those tribulations. He will allow those things in your life to turn you to Him.

Exodus 3:8-10 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

God wants to bring His people up into a good land, a large land. Unto a land that flows with milk and honey. I am not trying to sound like one of these prosperity preachers, but I am telling you right now, life outside of Egypt is a whole lot better. Is it not? I do not want to go back to Egypt. Those Jews kept wanting to go back to Egypt. They thought they had life better. No, things were not better when you were in Egypt. You were slaves, you were in bondage, and you were burdened. Most of all, you did not know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You did not serve the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You did not bow down to Him when you were in Egypt. You were bowing to the prince and the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. That is what you were doing.

"I am come down to deliver them." "I come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up." Notice that God's way is always out. "Out of the land, unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." It is the blessings of God. We know that milk is a picture of the Word of God. Honey is a picture of the Word of God. "Unto the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites."

"Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come up before Me. And I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them." That is what the world does to lost people. They are under oppression. The sad thing is, most of them do not even know it. They could be under oppressions to drugs and alcohol and pornographic material, to slavery, to religion. Religion brings oppression upon you. It brings a burden of slavery upon you. It puts you in bondage. Until the blood has been applied, every human being in this world is in bondage. They are a slave. But we come to deliver those people and to bring redemption and freedom.

Exodus 3:11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

"Who am I?" Notice his sense of humility and his deep sense of inadequacy. Moses knew he could not do this in his own strength. He could not do it in his own power. Here is Moses, and God's hand is upon him. Yes, God is calling him. Why is God calling Moses? Because God, when Moses was in the presence of Almighty God, Moses was broken and contrite and humble. That is one of the key things on how God will use you.

One of the biggest problems in churches is people get filled with pride. God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble, does He not? The Bible says, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and He will exalt you in due time." The key element in service and ministry is humility. It is you being humble before the presence of God. Where does this humility come from? It comes from being in the presence of God and being at the foot of the cross. That is where you get humility. You will never possess humility outside of you being broken and contrite before God. Humility comes from the living Word and the living Spirit of God. When you see God for who He is, and you understand His holiness, you understand His attributes, you understand His nature, and that He takes the Word of God and He reveals Himself to you through the pages of Scripture, you cannot help but be humble. You just humble yourself under the mighty hand of God because you see God for who He is.

Sometimes we think we are something. You get some people, they think they are God's gift to the church. Let me tell you something, you are not God's gift to the church. I am not God's gift to the church. Bob is not God's gift to the church. Jesus is God's gift to the church. If God chooses to use you, it is because of His sufficiency in your inadequacy. That is it. Moses says, "I am slow of speech. I cannot talk."

Exodus 4:1-5 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

Moses is like, "They are not going to believe me." How many times have we talked ourselves out of a witness? There have been times that we all talk ourselves out of a witness. I did it one time. We were riding horses somewhere, and this guy comes up. He was about six-three, six-four, tattoos all over him, looked like a crazy man. I told the story to people here in my church, and the Lord is like, "Give him a tract." I reach in my pocket. "I do not have any tracts, God." I did not want to deal with this guy. He had this crazy look in his eyes, and I had this little green Gideon's Bible, one of those prison Bibles or something, and I do not know where I got it, but I had it, and God says to me, "Give him that Bible." I am like, "Oh no, Lord, this is mine, man." He is like, "Hey," and the Lord is like, "Give it to him." So I went over and I said, "Hey buddy, got something for you." I did not want to do this. I mean, in my mind, I did not want to deal with this guy. I could see the crazy look in his eyes. I did not know what he was going to do. I did not know if he was going to try to attack me. I did not know what he was going to do. So I come over, I give him the Bible. Here he is, this big tattooed biker guy. He starts crying. He says, "I have been asking God to talk to me and to speak to me."

Sometimes we do not know what God is going to do. Moses is like, "Hey, who am I? They are not going to listen to me." Moses answered and said, "But behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice." You may feel that way in your own life, but you have to trust the living God. God tells you to witness to somebody, do it. God called you to do something, just do it.

"Well, what do you mean? They are not going to listen." Listen, let the chips fall where they may. God told Ezekiel, He says, "Listen, you preach to them, you witness to them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." So you can deliver yourself from the blood on your hands.

"And the Lord said unto him, What is in thy hand? And he said, A rod." "And he said, Cast it on the ground, and he cast it on the ground. And it became a serpent, and Moses fled from before it." He was afraid of snakes. How many of you are afraid of snakes? Do not tell me you are not, because if I stood up here with a big boa constrictor, some of you would be running out of here. I know how it works.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thy hand and take it up by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and he caught it, and it became a rod in his hand." Now God used this rod. He says, "Moses, we are going to use what you have. Moses, I am going to take you in your own ability, and I am going to enhance My glory to you." Whatever is in your hand, whatever you work with, that is your ministry. That is where the power of God will reside if you are humble and broken and contrite before God. Whatever you do for work, whatever you clutch, whatever you grip, whatever you walk with, wherever you go, that is your ministry. The people that you come in front of, those are the people that God puts you in contact with at work, at home, at the hospital, at the gym, at the pickleball court. Wherever you go is an opportunity to bring redemption, deliverance, and freedom. You use whatever is in your clutch, whatever is in your reach, whatever is in your palms, whatever is in your hands.

Exodus 4:6-9 And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.

God was showing Moses, "I am going to use your hand, even though your hand is dirty, and even though your hand is unclean, and when you put it into your bosom, you have seen what you really are. You have seen that your life is a life of leprosy and death." But God says, "You put it in, and when you pull it out, I am going to cleanse the work of your hands, and I am going to give you the ability to do what I will give you the power to do." God was revealing to Moses a lot of things here. There are a lot of practical lessons in the midst of this.

Exodus 4:10-12 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

Moses says, "God, I cannot do what You called me to do." That is true humility, is when you see yourself with a deep sense of overwhelming inadequacy, it brings you to the point where you just completely depend on God to work through you and in you. There are some people after they have been saved for a while, they lose that sense of inadequacy. When a preacher loses that sense of inadequacy, he loses the dependency upon God. We are all inadequate. Humility is the key to Christianity. Humility is what God has called us to be. You are only humble when you have been in the presence of Almighty God. When you have experienced His beauty and His majesty and His holiness, all of a sudden, you are broken and contrite and you are humble because you see Him for who He is and you see you for what you are. That is a humbling experience.

Sometimes we think we are something. You get some people, they think they are God's gift to the church. Let me tell you something, you are not God's gift to the church. I am not God's gift to the church. Bob is not God's gift to the church. Jesus is God's gift to the church. If God chooses to use you, it is because of His sufficiency in your inadequacy. That is it. Moses says, "I am slow of speech. I cannot talk."

I love how God answers him. "And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth?" It is one of those rhetorical questions. I did a series on rhetorical questions, and the rhetorical questions are not something to be answered, but it is something to probe you to thought. It is not necessary that God was looking for an answer to Moses, but God wanted Moses to think about something. Because Moses still does not know God. Moses does not know the deity and the majesty and the power of Almighty God still at this point. Moses just had an encounter with God. And God tells Moses, He says, "Who made man's mouth?" Moses has to think about this. "Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?" He is like, "Moses, listen, is it not Me?" It is a question. It is not a statement. He wants Moses to ponder on this thought process of who God is. Sometimes we lose sight of who God is. Sometimes we lose sight of His majesty and His holiness and His power and His authority and His sovereignty. We lose sight of that. Do not ever lose sight of God for who He is. Do not ever lose the perspective of God Himself. Then God tells him in verse 12, "Now therefore go."

Numbers 12:3(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

Moses was the meekest man on the earth at this point. Imagine that, being the meekest and the humblest man upon the whole world. Why was that? Because he had an encounter with the living God. The day you got saved, you were broken, you were contrite, and you were meek. Do not ever lose the brokenness, the contriteness, and the meekness. Once you lose that, you will lose the power of God in your life. You have to understand how this works in your life and in my life. Moses was broken. Moses was contrite. Why? It is because he was in the presence of Almighty God. He experienced the nature of God. He experienced the power of God. When he saw that burning bush, he knew that God was God. He was humble and meek. Meek above any man upon the earth. And God says, "You are meek, and you are My man. You are the one I am going to use to bring deliverance and redemption to My people. You are the one." Moses has this deep sense of humility, this deep sense of inadequacy, which brought him to a deep sense of dependability completely on God.

What I like about this, have you ever noticed anyone that ever got into the presence of God? What did they all do? They fell down, and they were broken and contrite before God. Everybody.

*Isaiah 6:1-5*In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Even the creatures will not look at God. Even the seraphims will not look at God because of His holiness. They are broken, they are contrite because they will not look at God's presence and His holiness. Then all of a sudden, look what Isaiah says. Isaiah says here, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." When God reveals Himself to you in the pages of Scripture, it brings out a supernatural and a spiritual humbleness that you become overwhelmed with who God is. There are times when you should open up that Bible, and you are so overwhelmed that you fall on your face and you cry and you sob before God. They say, "Pastor Mike, that does not happen to me." My question to you, have you been in His presence? Have you experienced His glory that has overwhelmed you to such an extent where you are broken, contrite, and humble? That is when God begins to use you. We know the rest of the book of Isaiah.

Let us look at another case in this situation. Go to Job chapter 40.

*Job 40:1-5*Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the LORD, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

Another rhetorical question by God. God asked Job, "Job, are you going to contend with Me? Are you going to argue with Me? Are you going to come up against My Word? Are you going to instruct Me? Are you going to tell Me what to do?" "He that reproveth God, let him answer." Then Job answered the Lord and said, "Behold, I am vile." He just said, "God, I am vile. I see You for who You are. Now I understand Your glory. Now I understand Your power. Now I see Your presence." And Job says, "I am vile." Wait a second. Did not God say to Job that he was a perfect and an upright man? One that feared God and eschewed evil in the beginning of the book? Where does that leave you and I? Let me tell you something. When you get into the presence of Almighty God, just like Job, just like Isaiah, you cry out and you say, "I am vile." In your flesh dwelleth no good thing.

After we have been saved for a while, brother, we think we are a little bit better. We do not realize how vile we still are. We think just because we have been sanctified and glorified and we have got the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that is His righteousness, and it is not your own. Do

not you ever forget it. Job says, "I am vile." Now notice what he says here. Job is like, "I am vile. What shall I answer thee? I have got nothing to say before God." Job says, "I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer. Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further." When you come into the presence of God, you are overwhelmed with humility. Why? Because you see Him for who He is, and you see you for who and what you are, and His majesty and His glory and His holiness overwhelms you.

There are a lot of Christians that do not experience that any longer. They experienced it the day they got saved. Remember, you cried and you wept before God, and then after you have been saved for a while, you have not entered into the holies of holies, and you were not broken and contrite and humble before God. You lose that sense of awe. Do not ever lose that sense of awe. Every time you open up the Holy Bible, you are in the presence of Almighty God. You are experiencing Him speak to you just like He spoke to Moses through the bush. Just like Isaiah saw the glory of God. Just like Job experienced the voice and the presence of Almighty God.

There is another individual I want to show you that was humbled by the very presence of Almighty God. Go to Acts chapter 9, New Testament illustration by the Apostle Paul.

Acts 9:3-6 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

There is the presence of God. What happens to Paul here? He fell to the earth, and he heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He was in the presence of God. He experienced the power, and he experienced the presence of Jesus Christ. He says he is humbled. He falls to the ground. He is like, "Lord, what do you want me to do? I will do whatever you want me to do." When you have been in God's presence, and you have experienced His power, you know what you say? "God, what wilt Thou have me to do?" You want to do something for God. Why? It is because His presence and His power overwhelms you. You want to bring glory to His name. You want to exalt Him. You want to lift Him up because you understood what He did for you on that cross. And you understand that He is the Creator of the universe and the Holies of Holies. And you cry out to God, "God, what do you want me to do? Where do you want me to go? What do you want me to do?" That changes everything in your life.

Everything in Paul's life was on the stake at this point. He did not care about his Sadducees and his Pharisees and his lineage. He said, "I count all that but dung that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings." He says, "I want to know Him. I want to see Him in the fullness of His glory. I want to experience His power. I want to experience His presence in my life. God, what will You have me to do? What will You have me

to do?" "And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." There is that sense of humility. "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man."

I want you to understand something here. Your pride will be the downfall of your ministry. It will be the downfall of your spiritual growth and your spiritual development. This is what happens to people after they have been churched. They spent so much time in church. Man, they learned great Bible doctrine under the great Bob Excel Alexander. And you think you know something, and your head begins to swell, and pride creeps into your life. That will destroy you. It will destroy you. What was the first sin? Pride. Satan is pride. "Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD." "Though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished."

First Peter 5:5-6 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Humility is something you have to put on, Brother Bob, just like the armor of God. Because you do not wake up with humility. You have to put it on every day just like you have to put on the armor of God. How many of you remember to put on the armor of God today? You need to put the armor of God on every day of your life. But you need to put on humility first. It says, "Be clothed with humility."

"For God resisteth the proud." I have enough problems in this world. I have enough resistance in this world. I have enough trials in this world. The last thing I need is God to resist me. I want God on my side. So you know what I am going to do? I am going to clothe myself with humility, Brother. "For God resisteth the proud. But He giveth grace to the humble." "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." Look at Moses. This is what we are talking about. He represents humility. What did God do? He was humble. He was broken. He was contrite. And God elevated him to a great man. All based on his humility.

But notice what this says, "For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." So let me give you three elements of grace. I am not going to preach this, but I want to give you three elements of grace that you need to understand. Grace is getting what you do not deserve. That is what grace is.

5. Saving Grace: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." The day you got saved, there was nothing more than the grace of Almighty God. You did not deserve it. You deserved to die and go to hell. And guess what, folks? I know this is going to shake some of you, you still deserve to go to hell. You think after you have been saved for a while and you have got the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that is His righteousness, and it is not your own. Do not you ever forget it.
6. Serving Grace: This is the grace that gives you the ability to serve God when you are humble. 1 Corinthians 15:10, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Paul says, "I did all this work, and I did all these

things, but you know what it was? It was God's grace." You are saved by God's grace, and you serve God by His grace. Do you understand that? That means that you cannot do anything without God's grace. That means that you are not worthy to do anything outside of the grace of God. You have got saving grace, you have got serving grace.

7. Sustaining Grace: Go to 2 Corinthians chapter 12. This is the grace that is going to get you through the trials, and this is the grace that is going to get you through the tribulations. This is the grace that is going to sustain you.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

God put a thorn in Paul's flesh to keep him humble so he would not be exalted above measure. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." And He said unto me, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Then Paul says, "Most gladly therefore, I rather glory in my infirmities. Why? That the power of Christ may rest upon me." Let me tell you something, you are going to need some sustaining grace, because there is going to come some trials in your life. There is going to come some tragedies in your life. There is going to come some tribulations. You need God's saving grace, you need God's grace to serve Him, and you need God's grace to sustain you through the trials that will come your way. The heartache, the pain, and the suffering. You need that grace.

As we wrap Moses up, do not ever continue to lose that sense of humility. Do not ever lose that sense of being broken and contrite. After you have been saved for a long time, listen, you still remain humble. If Bob asks you to do something, do it. Do not think that you are going to try to take over the church, that you know more than everybody. You know how many times that happens in a church? Where somebody loses that sense of humility, and they think they are God's gift to the church, they think that the church would not run without them. You are nothing but a prideful, arrogant thing, and God's hand will be removed from you.

1 Corinthians 8:1-2 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

"Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." "And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." You think you know something? You do not know anything. Some of you are walking around here with a big old head. "Man, I have studied under Bob Alexander, and Dr. Ruckman," and your head starts to swell. You know what happens? You think you know something? In all reality, you do not know anything. Did you know the Bible says that the love of Christ exceeds knowledge? You think you know something? Listen, how about something practical and simple? What does it mean to love somebody? What does it mean to love Jesus Christ? What does it mean to love the Bible? "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity

edifieth." It encourages. It stimulates. It builds up. You have people in the Ruckmanites. They have all this Bible knowledge. Some of them are so far from love and compassion and understanding, they cannot even minister effectively. That is a fact. We walk around here thinking we know everything. Some of us will even get to the point where we will look down on other Christians that do not come from a Bible-based church, because they do not know any doctrine. If God has blessed you with the knowledge and understanding, let me tell you something. You humble yourself under what God has revealed to you through this man. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament."

VI. David: The Available

Let us go get another character, the available David. I gave you the definition. Let us turn to 1 Samuel chapter 17. We will pick it right up in verse 24. Moses shows us the humble. David is the available.

1 Samuel 17:24-37 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid. And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel. And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him. And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause? And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner. And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, they fled from him and were sore afraid. Think about this. Saul is afraid. David's brothers are out in the battle. They are afraid. It says all the people of Israel were afraid of Goliath. Everybody but the one shepherd boy. And that boy had

spent time with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And you know what God did? God extracted his fears because he was with God. My Bible says God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind. There are a lot of Christians that are bound up with fear and anxiety and worry. Why? It is because you do not get with God. Do you understand that?

All the people of Israel, they were afraid of the giant. They looked at him, and they were overwhelmed. That is a picture of us when we look at problems, we look at trials, we look at tribulations, we look at tragedies, we look at difficulties. Some of us look at spilt milk, and we become overwhelmed with fear. We become overwhelmed with fear. With everyday duties and everyday trials and everyday situations in life, we become overwhelmed with fear. Be in the presence of God, and He will extract that fear from you. He did not give you and I the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. That book is what keeps your mind sound. It is what keeps you stable. It is what extracts the fear.

"And all the men of Israel when they saw the man, the problem, the trial, the giant, they fled from him and were sore afraid." If you are living with any type of fear and anxiety or worry or depression, it is because you are not spending time with God. "And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up." To defy Israel, to bring defiance upon God's people and to put them into bondage and to put them into slavery. "And it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." Listen, David did not do it for anything. David did it for the glory of God. Do not ever lose sight of that. David did not care about the daughter. David did not care about the riches. Why? It is because his affection was set on things above and not on things of this earth. David was doing what he was going to do for the glory of God and no other reason.

"And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" "And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him."

I love this thing about Eliab, David's older brother. David's older brother, if you know anything, you remember when they got anointed and Samuel says, "Surely this is the Lord's anointed." It was Eliab. And then all of a sudden the little brother comes in, and he gets to be the anointed king. You know what Eliab was filled with? Envy and jealousy. You men pay attention to this because your envy and your jealousy, it will destroy you. You have men out there that are insecure, that are envious and filled with jealousy towards someone in some other situation.

"And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David." Why? It is because he is jealous. Because David was anointed to be king. He is jealous because he knew he did not have what David had. Why did he not have what David had? Because David was in the presence of Almighty God. That is why he did not have what he had. "Eliab's anger was kindled against David. He said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of

thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." No, David's father told him to go down there. David was available.

"And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" David says, "Listen, I did not do anything. There is a cause." And the cause is, is that our people are being in bondage. Our people are living in fear. Our people are under distress. There is a cause. And we need to realize there is a greater cause than everyone in this room. And that cause is to bring people who are under bondage and under slavery is to set the captives free. That is the cause. That is why we have church. That is why you have Bible studies. That is why you have ministries. Why? There is a cause. What is the cause? The cause is to see the power of God move and to give honor and glory to God and to see the captives set free.

"And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner." He just ignored his brother. Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. He just turned away from his brother. This is the last time Eliab shows up. It is kind of strange, huh? He never becomes one of David's mighty men of valor. He never does anything for the Lord. "And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him."

"And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." He is available. Why is David available? Because he is humble. Where does David's confidence come from? His confidence comes from God. His confidence comes from a prayer life. His confidence comes from reading the Scriptures, the law. His confidence and his ability and his strength all came from God. Where is the coming of my strength? It is coming from above.

"And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." Notice there is always a doubter in the picture too, by the way. When you get out to set something for God, do something for God, there is always someone or something that is going to bring doubt into your mind. "Hey, that Bible says, do not let anybody despise you for your youth."

"And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."

Where was David's confidence? Where was his strength coming from? It was coming from God. It came from a relationship with God and His Word. We all know Psalm 119 when David is constantly reflecting his life back on the living Word of God, back on the laws, the precepts. The Word of God is what empowered him. The Word of God is what strengthened him. It was the Word of God that gave him the ability to do what he had to do. You cannot do anything without

God's Word. You will not have the confidence or the assurance. David is the available, but he is willing to do what God has called him to do.

We know the story. He faces the giant, he gets his sling, and boom, boom, boom, hits him in the head. We know that Goliath is a type of the antichrist, six fingers. We all know this doctrinal stuff. But what about a practical sense that Goliath and the Philistines are a picture of the world that want to bring people into bondage and captivity, and God has to raise up a David, somebody who spent time with Him in prayer and in the Word to face the adversary, the devil who goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. David gets the victory, but it is through the very power of God. David shows us somebody that is available.

1 Samuel 17:11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

You have a young boy who was the only one that was not afraid. Proverbs 28:1 says, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are as bold as a lion." Saul was afraid. David's brothers, Shammah, Eliab, they were all afraid. David was the only one that was without fear. If you make yourself available to God, you spend time in His presence, God will remove all of your fears about doing what He wants you to do and about going and accomplishing what He wants you to accomplish. You will look at life, you will not be afraid of any giant. You will not be afraid of anything. You will just look at it and be like, "Hey, God gave me the victory over the lion. God gave me the victory over the bear." You look at Goliath, you say, "No sweat." I do not care how big the problem is. I do not care how bad it looks. I do not care how loud it is because God did not give you the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

It was their boldness and their bravery that made people notice that they had been with Jesus. When you follow God wholeheartedly and you are in His presence continually, He just takes away that fear, that fear of ministry, that fear of just problems, that fear of difficulties, that fear of what tomorrow just may bring. You have to spend time in His presence.

David's sling was just another weapon that a young boy would use. It was a tool. It was something that he would use for accuracy. It was even for pleasure just using that sling. You know what God does? God uses whatever is in your hand, a tool, something that you use for pleasure, something that you use for protection. God will say, "I will use that sling if you are available to Me because I will use whatever is in your hand and whatever is in your clutches, whatever is in your grips." David was available. He was ready to go. Nobody was going to face the giant. Nobody.

One of the greatest things you can do, be humble and be available for what God has called you to do. You know what happens in our own life? We are not humble, number one, and then therefore we are not available. "Oh Bob, I have got too many things to do. I have got to go here. I cannot disciple somebody. I am not available." If you are humble, you will make yourself available. You

will make yourself available. You will understand that you are doing something for the glory of God. Why? It is because you have been in the presence of God, and He overwhelmed you with humility, and because you have been in the presence of God, and He gave you confidence to do what He has called you to do. And then you just become available.

It kind of reminds me of Isaiah 6:8, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." We have to be available. David understood that his sufficiency was not within himself, but it was in God.

VII. Shamgar: The Pliable

Let us turn to the book of Judges chapter 3. Now we are going to talk about Shamgar. How many of you know who Shamgar was? He was a judge of Israel. There is only really one verse that talks about him, but he did a great act for God. Now Shamgar represents the pliable. He shows you and I, here is a man. He has oxen, and he has got this ox goad, and he moves those oxen day in and day out. He plows with those oxen. He uses those oxen for work, and he uses that ox goad, and he uses that to control those oxen. Now here he is under attack of the Philistines. Remember, what was the object of the Philistines? To bring God's people into bondage. To bring God's people into oppression. That is what the world wants to do to you. The world wants to put you in bondage and oppression and slavery. That is what the Philistines wanted to do, and Shamgar uses an ox goad.

If you do not know what that is, let me explain it to you. It is a long stick, and it has a piece of metal on it. And the metal is a hook that goes like this. Then it has a point like a spear. Google it when you get a chance. The thing is an awesome weapon. He uses this. This was the very thing that he worked with day in and day out. It was a tool. It was something that he was familiar with. It was an object that he used day in and day out to defeat the Philistines. You see how God works in your life and my life? Something you use every day as a tool becomes a weapon for the glory of God. Do you understand that? This is powerful. God used what was in his hand at this moment's time.

Judges 3:31 And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel.

Here he is. 600 men, boom, boom. He is just fighting with that thing, warding off 600 men with the ox goad. You know what that tells me? That tells me that God will use you, and He will use what you work with and what you are familiar with and what you use every day of your life. Your tool, your object, whatever is in your hands, whatever is in your grip, whatever is in your clutches, that is what God will use to bring deliverance and redemption and salvation to people. Shamgar had that ox goad every day in his hands. What do you have in your hands that can bring honor and glory to God? He used that thing, and that is what brought glory to God, was to see the people of God delivered and freed from the bondage and the power of sin. That is the adaptable. We have got to be adaptable to every circumstance, to every situation in our life.

VIII. Samson: The Adaptable

Let us look at this. Go to Judges chapter 15. We are going to talk about Samson. We have seen Moses the humble, David the available, Shamgar the pliable. Now we are going to look at Samson. I believe this is the thrust of the message, and we will tie it together with the life of Samson.

1 Corinthians 9:22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Paul says, "I am going to be adaptable in my ministry." Paul says, "I am going to be adaptable to the Gentiles. I am going to be adaptable to the Jews. I am going to be adaptable to the philosophers." And you see Paul's ministry, you see Paul's life. He became all things to all men that he might win some. In every scenario, Paul was adaptable. You could drop Paul in the synagogue, he would preach. You could drop him amongst Gentiles, and he would preach. You bring him into Ephesus. And what did he do in that city that was filled with witchcraft? He built a church. He was adaptable.

We should be able to parachute into any place in this world, to any city, drop you in, and you should be adaptable. If you are humble and available and pliable and adaptable, God will use you in every scenario, in every situation. Some of us get limited in our ministry and in our witness in what we do for the Lord because we are not adaptable. We should be able to deal with any type of people from any religious background, from any culture, from any different perspective. We need to be adaptable. What if God brought a Jewish person in your life, you have to deal with that Jewish person. What if God brought an atheist into your life, you have to deal with that atheist. What if God brought somebody into your life that is just a heathen or that is bound up in all types of confusion. We need to be an adaptable people for any culture, for any race, for any religion. We need to be adaptable where God can use us.

This is what I love about Samson. Let us look at this.

Judges 15:14-16 And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

Now watch how innovative and creative Samson is. He is innovative, and he is creative. He is adaptable. "And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines, they shouted against him, and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him." They had Samson bound up. That is what the world wants to do to you. The world, the devil, the flesh, it wants to bind you up and tie you up. So you cannot do anything for God. "And the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands." He just broke those things like nothing. "And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and he put forth his hand, and he took it, and he slew a thousand men therewith." "And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass, I have slain a thousand men."

Man, think about how adaptable he is. He sees that jawbone of the ass, he says, "I am going to use that." He picks that thing up, he starts fighting, he defeats a thousand men. You see how innovative and creative he was? You should be able to use anything as an opportunity to minister and to fight and to do what God has called you to do. We have got to be innovative, we have got to be creative, and we have got to be adaptable. There are so many opportunities that go right by us as Christians because we do not use what is in front of us. Just, pick something up and say, "How am I going to bring glory to God with this?" I mean, of all things, the jawbone of an ass. And Samson is like, "I am going to defeat my enemies with this, the jawbone of an ass." The enemy had Samson bound up. You ever think about what this world wants to do to you? It wants to break you, bind you, and blind you.

I want to show you another story about Samson. I will just paraphrase this for the sake of time. But you know what Samson did, which was very creative and very, I mean, for a tactical purpose, this is very creative and innovative. He grabs, you know the story, he goes up and he catches 300 foxes. You remember the story? He ties their tails together. He lights the foxes on fire. And the foxes run through the crops of the Philistines and destroy all their crops. I mean, where did he come up with an idea like that? I am telling you, Samson was adaptable. He looked at the jawbone of the ass, he says, "That is what I am going to use." He says, "I am going to tie these foxes' tails together." That is how I am going to do it. He was adaptable. He was innovative, and he was creative. That is where you need to be in ministry. You need to be able to come up with some wild ideas on how you can bring glory to God. That is what Samson did.

Now, let us look at this a little bit further about the life of Samson. Go to Judges chapter 16.

Judges 16:25-30 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein; so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

We know the story. The lords of the Philistines, they gathered together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon, their god, and to rejoice. For they said, "Our god hath delivered Samson, our enemy into our hand." And when the people saw him, they praised their god, Dagon. For they said, "Our god hath delivered into our hands, our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us."

"And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport." They want to make fun of him. "And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport." They are just mocking him, making fun of him, ridiculing him. "And they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them." We know the story. What did they do? They bound Samson up, and they poked out his eyes. That is what the world will do to you and me. It will bind you, it will break you, and it will beat you. Samson lost his vision. Stay with me. He lost his power, and he lost his strength. Brother Bob, the world wants to strip every Christian in this world. And the world wants, the world wants the devil, the world wants to beat you up, bind you up, and blind you from your vision. And the Bible says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Samson is in there, bound up, beat up, broken up, and blind. He lost his vision.

But look what happens. "Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport." Samson is innovative, and he is creative. "And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." "And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein; so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life."

I want you to see something here. This is awesome. What does Samson do? He calls upon God. My Bible says, "Call upon Me, and I will show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." Samson needed his strength. He was blind, he was bound, he was broken, and he was beat up, but there is still a God in heaven. After you have been beat up by the world, and after you have been blinded, and you lost your vision for a little while, God is not through with you yet. God had another thing for Samson to do, and that was to complete the task that was before him. This world will beat you up, it will blind you, it will break you down to keep you from doing what God has called you to do. And you may even lose your vision for a moment's time, but we have got a God in heaven that if we call out to Him, He will answer us, and you know what He is going to do? He is going to restore you and renew your strength, once again. We serve an awesome, awesome God.

If you were to look at Samson, you would think, "Hey, it is all done for Samson. Samson, you were seduced by that woman, Samson, look at you now, you are bound up, you are blind, and you are tied up, and God has taken away your strength. It is all done, Samson." Listen, you may think it is all over, but let me tell you something, it is not all over. You may think, "God, You are done with me, I made a mess of my life." Yeah, you may have made a mess of your life, but He is not through with you yet. He is not through. You may have lost your vision, you may have lost the vision that God put in your heart, but He is not through with you. Samson is so innovative, he tells this young boy, he says, "Put my hands on the pillars," and then he just pushes them down,

and you know what he did? He brought glory to God. He brought glory to God. God was not done with him. I love this story about Samson. A lot of us like to beat him down, but let me tell you something, his name is mentioned in Hebrews 11, is it not? There is a God in heaven who still loves you, who will restore you in a moment's time, and He will strengthen you. God is not through with you yet. He has got another task, another mission to accomplish. This was at the darkest time in Samson's life, the darkest time, and he says, "God, what can I do for You now? I messed up. I made a mess of my life, but I am still here to do something which You called me to do," and he had a great victory that day.

There is an expression we say that He is still God. You may have made a mess of your life like Samson, but remember this: He is still God. It means that His grace is still sufficient, His love is still everlasting, His mercy still endures forever. It means that He is still holy. It means that He is still sovereign. It means that He is still absolute. It means that He can do all things. He is still God.

Jeremiah 33:1-3 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court of the prison, saying, Thus saith the LORD the maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; the LORD is his name; Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

God has to remind Jeremiah of who He is. "I am the maker. I am the creator. I am the sovereign one. The LORD is His name." Jeremiah was in a dark point just like Samson was in a dark point. You are going to come to a point in your life when everything is dark. You are beat up, you are broken down, and you are worn out. You have got to be adaptable and call out to the living God of heaven. Then God tells Jeremiah, He says, "Jeremiah, listen, I know you are in prison. I know it is a dark point in your life, but call unto Me, and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty works, things which thou knowest not."

I love this story. Samson cried out to God, "God, restore me." And the power of God came upon him one last time. What was it for? The glory of God. No matter how far you have gone in this world, no matter how dark things get for you, no matter how beat up and bound up and blinded you have been, you may have lost your vision in your mission, in your ministry, you may have lost it all, but if you call upon God, He will restore you. The only thing you have to do is be creative and innovative and adaptable. We must be adaptable, but we must be humble first, available, pliable, and then adaptable, dependable, responsible, and reliable, but mostly we must be faithful.

IX. Conclusion: The Power Is In God

I am going to sum it up with this. The staff, the power was not in Moses' rod. The power was not in David's sling. The power was not in the ox goad. The power was not in the jawbone of the ass. You know where the power of God was? It was on the men who were submissive, who were humble and were broken and contrite before God. And then God says, "I am going to use you and what is in your hand to bring honor and glory to Me." The power is in God and not we ourselves.

1 Peter 4:11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

My charge to you this morning, 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In everything we do is for the glory of Almighty God. When we sing those songs, it is for the glory of God. When you minister to people, it is for the glory of God. When you serve the Lord Jesus Christ, it is for no other reason but for His glory, that He may be glorified. You say, "Well, because He is worthy." He is worthy. God is going to use you when you are humble, when you are available, when you are pliable, and when you are adaptable. But look at the order. You have got to be humble before you can be pliable. And before you can be pliable, before you are going to be available, you have got to be totally broken before God. Then God can begin to use you. Once you are humble, available, pliable, and adaptable. There is a lot of work that needs to be done in this world. Whatever is in your hand is your tool of ministry. You are not sufficient within yourself, but our sufficiency is of God who has made us able ministers.

Let us bow for a word of prayer.

Lord, we just come before You, and we thank You. Thank You for Moses, the humble, David, the available, Shamgar, the pliable, Samson, the adaptable. And Lord, we know that the power was not in the staff or the sling or the ox goad or the jawbone, but the power was in these men that were humble, available, pliable, and adaptable. And mostly they were faithful to bring honor and glory to You. And Lord, I thank You for this opportunity to preach here. I pray for these people that in everything they do, how they speak, how they live, how they act, will all be for the glory of God. We thank You for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And I pray that You will be glorified this morning in Christ's name. Amen.