



Small Group Guide

The Burning Bush: When God Calls the Unlikely

Based on Exodus 3-4

Overview

In this message, we explored the encounter between Moses and the angel of the Lord at the burning bush. After 40 years of obscurity in the desert, Moses — a fugitive shepherd tending someone else's flock — is called by God to lead an entire nation out of slavery. Through Moses' five objections and God's faithful responses, we see that God consistently chooses the unlikely, equips the inadequate, and pursues the forgotten. This guide is designed to help your group go deeper into those themes and apply them honestly to your own lives.

Key Takeaways

- God's silence is not the same as God's absence. He sees, he hears, and he knows — even when circumstances suggest otherwise.
- Slow is not the same as stuck. God may be forming you in a season that feels longer than you would prefer, but it is exactly what you need.
- God consistently chooses the humble and the unlikely to accomplish his most significant purposes, so that the glory points to him and not to human strength.
- Moses' greatest weakness in this passage was not his speech. It was his lack of faith. Our greatest obstacle to obedience is rarely the circumstance — it is our unwillingness to trust God with it.
- God will give you everything you need to accomplish everything he has asked you to do.

Sermon Connection Verses

The following passages were central to the sermon. Read them together as a group before beginning discussion, or assign them as reading before your gathering.

- Exodus 3:1-15
- Exodus 4:1-17
- Hebrews 11 (the "great cloud of witnesses" passage referenced in the sermon)
- Hebrews 12:1 (the cloud of witnesses cheering believers on)
- Ephesians 2:1-5 (dead in sin, made alive in Christ)

Discussion Questions

Opening

1. The sermon opened with the idea that certain days change everything. Think of a day in your own life that altered the direction of everything that came after it. What made that day so significant? How did God show up in it, even if you did not recognize it at the time?
2. Moses spent 40 years in the desert before God spoke to him from the burning bush. Have you ever been in a season that felt like a long, silent stretch — where you wondered whether God had forgotten about you or moved on? What did that feel like?

Digging In

3. The sermon pointed out that God spoke to Moses only after Moses turned to look. The observation was made that "we miss the voice of God because we have never turned to look his way." What does it look like practically for you to turn and give God your full attention? What tends to get in the way?
4. God describes himself to Moses by saying "I have seen," "I have heard," and "I know" the suffering of his people. He had been silent for over 400 years, but he was not unaware. How does this truth speak to a situation in your own life where God has seemed quiet? How does it change the way you interpret that silence?
5. The sermon made the point that God consistently chooses the humble and the unlikely. Looking at Moses, David, Mary, and others, why do you think God works this way? What does it reveal about his character and his purposes?
6. Moses raised five objections to God's call. The first was "Who am I?" and the second was essentially "Who are you?" The sermon referenced John Calvin's observation that true wisdom consists of knowing God and knowing ourselves. How does a deeper knowledge of God change the way you see yourself? How does a clearer view of yourself drive you toward a deeper knowledge of God?
7. When Moses objected about his inability to speak, God responded by asking who made his mouth. God was essentially saying that the very weakness Moses was pointing to was something God had formed and could use. Is there a weakness or limitation in your own life that you have used as a reason to hold back from obedience? How might God want to work through that very thing?
8. The sermon suggested that when Moses said "send someone else," he may have missed a miracle God wanted to do in and through him — and that the blessing was then given to Aaron instead. Have you ever looked back on a moment and wondered what you missed because you said no to God? What did that teach you?

Personal Reflection

9. The sermon closed with this question: "Is there a place where the Lord is asking you for difficult obedience today?" Take a moment of honest silence, and then share with the group — as much as you feel comfortable — what comes to mind when you hear that question.
10. The poem quoted near the end of the sermon includes the line "Earth's crammed with heaven and every common bush a fire with God." What does it look like to live with that kind of awareness — that God is actively present and pursuing us in the ordinary moments of everyday life? What would change about your week if you lived that way?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to practice individually or as a group before your next gathering.

Turn and Look Set aside at least ten minutes each day this week with no phone, no music, and no agenda. Simply sit quietly and ask God to speak. Write down anything that surfaces — a conviction, a prompting, a Scripture that comes to mind, or even a question you need to bring to him.

Name Your Objection Identify one area of your life where you have been saying "send someone else" — a relationship that needs reconciliation, a confession that needs to be made, a step of generosity or service you have been avoiding. Write it down. Pray over it. Share it with one trusted person in the group who can follow up with you.

Revisit a Season of Silence Think back to a period when God felt absent or distant. Write a brief reflection on what you now see God may have been doing in that season that you could not see at the time. Share it with the group as an encouragement to others who may be in that kind of season right now.

Pray Through Weakness Take the specific weakness or limitation that came to mind during question 7 and bring it to God in prayer this week. Rather than asking him to remove it, ask him what he wants to do through it. Journal what comes up.

Pray With Someone If you did not take the opportunity to visit a prayer partner at the end of the service, make it a point this week to ask someone — a spouse, a friend, a group member, a pastor — to pray specifically over the area where God is calling you to obedience.

Closing Prayer Guide

Close your group time by praying together using the following prompts. You may pray silently, take turns praying aloud, or have one person pray on behalf of the group.

- Thank God that he sees, hears, and knows your situation — even when he has been silent.
- Confess any area where you have been raising objections to what God is asking of you.
- Ask God for the faith to take the next step of obedience, however small.
- Pray for one another by name, specifically over the areas of difficult obedience that were shared during discussion.

A Note for Group Leaders

This passage has the potential to surface real vulnerability. Some group members may be in genuine seasons of waiting and may feel forgotten by God. Others may be carrying unconfessed

disobedience or a specific step they have been avoiding. Create space for both honesty and hope. The goal is not to pressure anyone into immediate action, but to help each person leave the conversation one step closer to trusting God with whatever he is asking of them.