

GOD CALLED MOSES AND STILL CALLS TODAY!

by Jeff Linthicum and Carol Duerksen

KEY VERSE:

Exodus 3:10 "So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:10)

FAITH STORY:

Exodus 3:1-4:18

FAITH FOCUS:

While Moses is out in the wilderness tending his sheep, he notices a burning bush. Going closer to inspect the bush and wondering why it was not consumed by fire, Moses hears God talking to him. God tells Moses to go back to Egypt and to bring his people out of bondage. Moses doubts his ability to do such a task, but God tells Moses how his call will be confirmed.

SESSION GOAL:

Help students learn how to hear God's call in their lives.

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the class session, students will identify several ways in which God calls them.

MATERIALS NEEDED AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- 1 Small pieces of paper for ballots, pencils.
- 2 Blindfold
- 3 Copies of worksheet for each student
- 4 CD and CD player if using the Small Class Option in the Focus.
- 5 Chalk board or dry eraser board
- 6 A cell phone
- 7 Posters taped on the wall (or throughout the church or outdoors if those are options) for a prayer walk. There would be six posters, one with each of these phrases: 1) Who am I to do this? I'm a nobody. 2) Who's talking to me? How do I know it's God? 3) What if people make fun of me? 4) I'm not good at doing this. 5) Please don't ask me—ask somebody else.
- 8 **Note to Teacher:** Take a few minutes prior to class to reflect on different ways God has called and confirmed you for different tasks. For example, how did you come to teach this class? Did someone see this gift in you and ask you? Or did you volunteer because you heard God calling you to this ministry? Be prepared to share several examples with your class of times that you felt God called you to a certain job or ministry.

SESSION OUTLINE

FOCUS: (5–7 minutes)

Ask for a student to volunteer to be blindfolded—it should be someone who has known at least one person in the class for at least several years. Ask the volunteer to identify that person. Blindfold the volunteer. Tell them that their job will be to pick out the voice of their long-time classmate amidst the other voices of the class members. Instruct the long-time classmate to call the volunteer's name in a normal tone and to stay in a stationary position across the room. Instruct other class members to mill around the room, calling the volunteer's name in varying levels, trying to distract the volunteer from being able to concentrate on the voice he/she is trying to hear.

Small Class Option: If you have a small class and this exercise would not work for you, here is an alternative: Bring a CD and CD player. Play a song quite loudly—so loud that it is hard to hear each other talk. While the song is playing, ask students to raise their hands when they hear you say their name. Call out their names softly.

CONNECT: (5–7 minutes)

Discuss the activity.

Ask: *Was it hard to hear the voice you were listening for? What made it hard?* If you did the blindfold activity, ask the student what he/she did to identify the voice they were listening for. If using the CD activity, ask students how they managed to hear your voice, if they did.

Finally, ask: *How hard is it to hear God calling? How do you think people hear God?*

Allow time for answers and discussion, then say: *Let's look at a story of a guy who heard God calling him but wasn't sure he wanted to.*

EXPLORE THE BIBLE: (15–20 minutes)

Ask for volunteers or assign three students to act out the story of God calling Moses as found in Exodus 3:1 - 4:18. You will need a narrator, God, and Moses. The narrator reads everything that isn't in quotes, God and Moses read what is in their quotes.

OPTION: Divide your class into groups and assign each group one section of the story to read and perform. Section divisions could be: chapter 3:1-6, 7-12, 13-22, chapter 4: 1-5, 6-9, 10-17.

Discuss the story: Ask students to name five objections Moses made and list them on the chalk board.

- 1 Who am I to go? I'm a nobody.
- 2 Who shall I tell them sent me? Who are you anyhow?
- 3 But suppose they don't believe me or don't listen to me?
- 4 I'm not a good speaker.
- 5 Please just send somebody else.

APPLY: (15–20 minutes)

- 1 Share your own stories of times when you felt called by God. Tie in any of the objections you may have had that were similar to the ones offered by Moses.

Give students a few minutes to think about a time when they feel they were called by God to do something. Tell them that you are going to pass around a cell phone, and when they get the phone, they should hold it up and pretend to be listening to it. After a moment of listening, ask them to share their “God calling” story, OR if they don’t want to share, they may choose to say “Wrong number” or “No answer” or “Leave a message please” or anything else they want to say that ties in with phone calls. Encourage them to share a story, but don’t insist on it.

- 2 Tell students that they are going to take a few minutes to go on a prayer walk, and tell them about the 6 posters. Ask them to spread out, starting at different posters, and to think about areas where God might be calling them, but they are feeling like the responses on the posters. Encourage them to visit each poster and to pray at the posters that state the way they feel about God’s calling in their lives. Allow enough time for them to get through this without having to hurry back.

RESPOND: (5–10 minutes)

Hand out the worksheets to the students. Encourage them to do this activity this week. Close with this prayer, with the students responding “Talk to me God, I’m listening” after each phrase you say:

Teacher: When your voice calls to me from out of nowhere:

Students: Talk to me, God, I’m listening.

Teacher: When I doubt that it’s you who’s calling,

Students: Talk to me, God, I’m listening.

Teacher: When I doubt that I can do what you want me to.

Students: Talk to me God, I’m listening.

Teacher: When I feel, deep inside, that I can do it with your help,

Students: Talk to me, God, I’m listening.

Teacher: As we leave now to go out into our worlds.

Students: Talk to me, God, I’m listening.

Amen.

INSIGHTS FROM SCRIPTURE:

The call of Moses was the beginning of the release of the captives from Egypt and the start of the new people of God. Moses’ story is one of tough beginnings and a childhood of luxury. Scholars differ on their views of his teen and young adult years, although all agree he would have been well educated. It is believed that around the age of forty (1) Moses killed an Egyptian for striking a Hebrew slave (Exodus 2:12.) This act identified him with the Hebrew people and he had to run for his life. The next approximately forty years were spent

as the shepherd of his father-in-law's flock (1). Then Moses' had his breath-taking encounter with God while he was leading his flock just beyond the wilderness. (Unlike our common interpretation of a wilderness being a desolate, barren place, this was a place for pasturing cattle and sheep.) (2). While on the other side of the pasturing area, Moses saw the burning bush. For centuries, fire had been the chosen symbol of God's holiness, indicating the intense, all-consuming operation of God's holiness in regard to sin (3). In the midst of the bush the voice came, calling Moses for his task of leading the people out of bondage. Then God promised a sign that it was indeed God who was sending Moses out to lead the Israelites. God declared that Moses would worship God on the mountain range he was on. At this time the Bible says he was at Horeb, which is also called Mount Sinai. This was of course fulfilled with Moses' encounter once again on this very mountain range when he was given the Ten Commandments. The confirmation would come after the step of faith—after Moses said yes to God's call despite his misgivings.

God still calls people today to step forward, put off the privileged life, and stand boldly for God. God is alive and active in our lives—in your life and the life of your students. It is our prayer that this lesson would be one of inspiration to you as a teacher as well as to your students. May you all encounter burning bushes and say "Yes, talk to me God, I'm listening."

1 Eerdmans Commentary on the Old Testament, Exodus p-329, Eerdmans press

2 Easton's Bible Dictionary

3 Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible

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Student Worksheet

God Sightings!!!!

When and how will God show up for you this week? What will be your "burning bush?" Keep a chart and be surprised at the end of the week!

	At home	At school	Through prayer	Through other people	Through the Bible
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					