

Date written: 15 Feb. 1952

Text: Exodus 3:1--"he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb."

Theme: A way to meet God.

Proposition: In faithful performance of daily duties lies the opportunity to meet God.

Sources: Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary, page 852.

Places preached (with dates):

17 Feb 52, Camp ~~Wood~~ Stockade  
(466 AAA Co (F))  
US Discpl. Barracks

G. Rucker, March 1952

Southside (Cleveland) so. ch., Ala. 52  
Wheatland & Glendale, Miss., June 26, 52  
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Introduction:

1. Summary of how Moses' story points out theme:

a. Summary of Moses' story in the Scripture.

b. Moses in desert a long time (Ex 2:23 -- "in the course of this long time," -- Smith & Goodspeed version).

c. Indication that he led flock to backside of desert only in performance of his ordinary duties in search for grass.

d. In this performance of daily duties came to the mountain of God, and found true and meaningful mission for his life.

2. For us today this part of Moses' life suggests how we may meet God. To examine this suggestion from the life of Moses is our purpose here.

I. Exercise judgment in choosing occupation.

1. Moses.

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a. Reared as royalty, but in private teaching of nurse-mother~~k~~ taught Israel's traditions.

b. Sympathetic with oppressed Jews, and in righteous anger kills a murderer among the Jews' oppressors.

c. Flees to wilderness. Thru an act of his kindness enters the house of Jethro. Marries a daughter there. At least one child born to him.

d. Several years passed — "In process of time" (King James version), "In the course of this long time" (Smith & Goodspeed version) — with Moses tending Jethro's flocks.

e. Perhaps being a sheep herder, or shepherd, wasn't Moses' choice, perhaps it was. At least it was honorable with some value resulting. However he entered it, there was nothing about it to be ashamed about. No reason to suspect that he did it except faithfully and well, to the best of his ability. To support this idea is fact of 2 fertile, well-watered valleys near Mt. Horeb.

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2. You and I: Not always possible to enter occupation most preferred. Sometimes even forced by government or circumstances into our work, which is objectionable, even as Moses had to stay in the desert as a fugitive was a shepherd partly because there wasn't much else to do. When choice exists, choose occupation in which you can do most for self and others. When choice doesn't exist, do best possible in forced task.

3. Christopher Columbus. Grew up in Genoa. Interested in sea. Perhaps leader in daring episodes. Became convinced during life as seaman of truth of theory that earth's shape was round and Asia could be reached by sailing west from Europe. Subsequently proven ~~right~~ except greatly mistaken as to size of earth, thinking it much smaller than it really is. The thing we are interested in here is that he chose the sea as his place of livelihood when other areas were open to him. It was a definite choice, and one with far-reaching consequence

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II. Having entered on occupation, perform  
the various duties faithfully and well.

1. Moses. At the foot of Mt. Horeb were at least two fertile, watered valleys, evidently excellent for grazing. In leading the flocks entrusted to him there Moses was performing his duties faithfully and well.

2. It may be the backbreaking and ridiculous that we are ordered to do in the army sometimes, but if we must do it there is a lot to be said for doing it well. In civilian life, too, unless actually harmful and wrong, we should do the job in hand as expected of us and as best we can. If it's field laborer, be a good one. If a clerk of some type, keep things the best you can.

3. a. Paul, Peter, and the other apostles did their best in whatsoever job they were. We see that if we read the record carefully.

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v b. Christopyer Columbus the sailor evidently did his job well, for it is of record that he was a captain at an early date.

c. Best effort doesn't always yield success. In the early days of our country a Mr. Hunt was at the head of an expedition which attempted to begin an ambitious commercial project in the far west. The project met with failure, but not because Mr. Hunt didn't do his job, faithfully and well. In spite of failure, history remembers him well, and he must have had a good, clean, **guiltless** sense of personal worth in spite of disappointment.

III. In doing the job, be alert and curious about unusual incidents, for the may serve as the voice of God to you.

1. Moses. "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." If Moses had not had such curiosity he would not, certainly at that time, have heard the voice of God or have received

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his commission from God. His curiosity "paid off" for all future generations.

2. In performance of your job and mine alertness pays off in many ways.

a. It may boost production which in turn brings a pay raise.

b. It may save your life, someone else's life, your business, your home, or even your country and its freedom.

c. Any or all of these are rewards for alertness on the job, but there is a greater opportunity. You and I can find God in our jobs and duties if we do them faithfully and well and with alertness and curiosity.

### 3. Illustrations:

a. Christopher Columbus had as the great motive behind his voyage the making of enough profit to finance a crusade to take Jerusalem by force from the Mohammedans so it would again be in the power of Christianity. Perhaps his thinking was mixed up about what God

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really wanted, but one must give him credit for being true to the mission that he had set his heart on. Although he never made money enough to finance a crusade as he wished, the intention to do so was topmost in his heart in all four of his cruises. In all his cruises again and again he interpreted the things he discovered and saw as assurance of God's favor on his intention for a Holy Cursade. Perhaps he was mistaken, but believing himself right he stayed alert for the meaning of that which he saw.

b. A young man loved to work with machinery, particularly heavy, cumbrous machines. Not able to finish even high school, he went to work. He kept his interest in machinery, worked around it, was constantly dreaming up ways to improve it. Some of these ideas were patented and enough money made from them to give him some independence. Going into business for himself he continued

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his designs until he became a successful manufacturer on a huge scale of read-building and earth-moving machinery. His machines, carrying his name which is the company name, are used all over the world, the Le Torneau earth-moving machines. In his success Mr. Le Torneau saw the active work of God and heard God, as it were, demanding that he give time and money to preaching and working for extension of the Christian faith. Alert to the unusualness of his success, he found God, and is one of America's top evangelists with absolutely no material gain for himself from his work for God.

c. Not everyone can be as successful as Mr. Le Torneau or as J. C. Penney, whom we might have talked about as easily.

But you and I can keep alert in our everyday jobs for evidences of God's intentions for us. Many a mechanic, clerk, soldier, farmer, has found his belief in God proven by being alert to the unusual -- or even to the usual--

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in his work. It is from these people, the average working people, that the majority of religious leaders come; and that includes both professional religious workers and voluntary unpaid ones like the army of Sunday School teachers. You, too can find God by being alert to everything in the everyday environment of your job.

IV. When aware that God is speaking to you listen reverently for his commands.

1. Moses. "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said, 'Moses, Moses.' And he said 'Here am I'.--- and Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." Moses was fearfully reverent, but listened to God. He even brought up objections to God's plan for him; yet he did God's bidding.

2. You and I.

a. In this day it's pretty hard sometimes to feel certain of what God wants

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of you.) Things that once were considered wrong, like card playing, dancing, drinking, gambling, and even adultery, seem to be accepted as all right by many people, even by most people. How can you know what is right and what is wrong? How can you know that what you think is God speaking to you really is? One way is simple and obvious: by observing the results of specific ways of acting.) If drinking, for instance, causes you to have a hangover which makes you do the job worse, makes you cross and irritable with others; if drinking takes money which should be for other things, like rent, food, clothing, education, church; if drinking causes you to do things you know are wrong; then you know drinking is wrong. Similar tests should be applied to other acts in question. You can be sure God is speaking to you if what you understand him to command you to do makes you more useful to yourself and others and if it does no harm.

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b. If you feel that God is speaking to you but that the message is incomplete, don't fret. Wait patiently. Sometimes it takes a lifetime of reverent alertness to know God's complete will for us. Listen reverently for His voice.

3. The O.T. story of Samuel illustrates reverent listening for God's commands once one is aware that God is speaking.

Conclusion:

1. We have found suggested in the story of Moses' experience at the burning bush 4 steps for you and me in meeting God:

(1) Exercise judgment in choosing our occupation, if possible.

(2) Having chosen occupation, perform its various duties faithfully and well,

(3) In doing job, be alert to and curious about unusual incidents, for they may serve as the voice of God to you,

(4) When aware that God is speaking to you, listen reverently for his commands

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2. We have demonstrated the value of each of these 4 ideas from the life of Moses and from other Scripture and from everyday life past and present.

3. If you would state briefly how you can meet God, you must assuredly say that in faithful performance of daily duties is the opportunity to meet God. as we

meet God thus the Christian finds that life indeed is an ~~adventure~~ exciting, challenging, and enjoyable adventure.

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