

Leadership Lessons from the Life of Moses

Lesson #7, God Doesn't Accept Excuses But Provides Ways

Text: Ex.4:10-17

Our first six lessons have focused on *preparation* for leadership; primarily, preparation of *mind, heart, life, relations, power and purpose*, and *support* (from *family*). Now we'll shift our attention more to *principles* of leadership.

- **God doesn't accept excuses, vv.10,13.**

I'm not sure if Moses' perception of his lack of *eloquence* was real, imagined, or just an excuse (though I suspect the latter, cf. vv.13,14a). I do know that Acts 7:22 describes him as a man "*educated in all the learning of the Egyptians*" and a man "*of power in words and deeds.*" There is also a very eloquent *song* attributed to him in Ex.15:1-17; cf. Rev.15:3. Perhaps he authored the song, or he may have just recorded the words through the inspiration of the Spirit. But his articulacy, or lack thereof, is not really the point. Whether *real, imagined*, or just an *excuse* doesn't really matter because God did not accept it as a reason not to do what He had commanded, cf. 3:6-10! We can find all sorts of "reasons" to not prepare ourselves for leadership positions, or to participate in leadership activities. Like the one proffered by Moses, they may be *real, imagined*, or just an *excuse*. But remember a few important principles:

- When God *commands*, we must *obey*, period, Luke 6:46;
- When God *commands*, we *can* obey- He may command the *improbable*, but doesn't require the *impossible*, Josh.1:1-9; and,
- When God *commands*, He supplies the other essential *means* to obey, v.12.

So, like Moses, it really doesn't matter whether our excuses are *real* or just *self-imposed perceptions*, when God commands we must obey. And when we are willing to step out of our *self-imposed limitations* and *move forward in faith* (cf. Josh.1:9; Matt.17:20), He promises to *be with* and *assist*...

- **God does provide ways and means, vv.11-17.** Let's consider them:

1. **Assurance, v.11.** Don't miss the point of God's rhetorical questions to Moses. God created not only man's *mouth, ears, and eyes*, but also *all* of man (and everything else, Heb.3:4!). Therefore, He is well aware of our *limitations* and *capabilities*. The point is that He knows Moses. He knows everything about him, much more than Moses himself, and yet appointed him to *leadership*. God has patiently waited for 80 years for Moses to be "ready," and then said it was time for him to *go* (and *do*), v.12a. What about you? Are you being *prepared* for leadership, or is it time for you to *go* and *do*?
2. **Assistance, v.12.** Note that God said that He would be "*with*" Moses' mouth and "*teach you what you are to say.*" God didn't promise to "do it for" Moses, but to "*be with*" and "*teach*"- both of which still required Moses' *faithful, active participation*. We often pray for God to do *for* us what we cannot do for ourselves. This is right and proper- if such is really the case; but remember also that He required Noah to "*Make for yourself an ark...*" cf. Gen.6:14. Are we asking God to do *for* us what He is only willing to *assist* us in doing? Leaders rely on God's *assistance*, but are willing to *act* themselves to accomplish what they can for His purposes. He will help if we courageously *act in faith*.
3. **Implements, vv.14b-17.** Moses was commanded to *go* and *do*, but he was given *tools*, or *implements*, to accomplish the task. He was given the *abilities* of his brother *Aaron*. Note, again, Moses' required involvement, v.15a, and God's promised *assistance*, vv.15b,14b,16b (i.e. "*and his mouth,*" "*he will be glad in his heart,*" and "*you shall be as God to him*"). And don't forget about *the staff* either, v.17. It was imbued with the *power and presence* of God, cf. vv.1-5! God provides *implements* for leaders today also, cf. 2Pet.1:3; Eph.6:10-18, but we must be willing to *act in faith* and use the implements He provides, vv.4a; 20b.

God is patient while we are being *prepared* for leadership, but accepts no excuses when it is time to *go* and *lead*. He provides *assurance, assistance, and implements*, but we must be willing to step out of our self-imposed limitations and *lead*!

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Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think Moses' *lack of eloquence* was *real* or just an *excuse*? Why?
2. Why does it (the answer to #1) not really matter? What's the lesson for us in this regard?
3. When we only see our *mistakes* and/or *limitations*, what are we failing to see?
4. What three principles do we need to understand in order to obey "when God commands"?
5. What is the point of God's rhetorical questions to Moses in v.11? Does the same apply to us today when we make *excuses* to avoid doing what He expects of us with regard to obedience or leadership?
6. Why was God *angry* with Moses in v.14? What is the lesson for us in this?
7. What *assistances* did God promise Moses in v.12? Are these two one in the same, or different? Please explain.
8. When should we ask God to do something *for us* versus asking Him to *help us*?
Related: Why do you think we ask God to do *for us* what we should be *doing ourselves*?
9. Just from our text in this lesson, what *implements* or *tools* was Moses given to perform his appointed leadership task?
10. What *implements* or *tools* has God provided to help us carry out our leadership task(s) today?