Series: Steps to Freedom

March 25, 2018

Message Four:

**Just Do It!**

Exodus 4:18-31

**Intro:** This month we have begun to look at the book of Exodus - I hope we are seeing and taking Steps to Freedom - as this is the book that teaches us about how God took the Israelites to freedom.

1st message - God’s got a plan for your life!

2nd message - Time to Act - God is acting on our behalf - we need to act on the plan of God as He reveals it to us.

3rd message - Accept the Call - God does have a call on each of our lives -

* He has given us access to His presence.
* He sees what we are going through.
* We shouldn’t protest His plan - Don’t think less of yourself that what God thinks of you!

If we believe God can do anything, we have to believe that God can do anything through us!

Moses was wavering here - we don’t want to waver!

So today, we steal the Nike brand motto - Just Do It!

This was the Next Step for Moses - what’s your next step?

***Andy Griffith clip -***

This is what God is saying to Moses …

Is He saying this to us?

**> We need to obey.**

Exodus 4:18-20 - So Moses went back home to Jethro, his father-in-law. “Please let me return to my relatives in Egypt,” Moses said. “I don’t even know if they are still alive.”

 “Go in peace,” Jethro replied.

 Before Moses left Midian, the Lord said to him, “Return to Egypt, for all those who wanted to kill you have died.”

 So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey, and headed back to the land of Egypt. In his hand he carried the staff of God.

Do you struggle with obedience? Some people think they struggle with know what God wants them to do - but they really do know what God wants them to do - they’re just not sure they want to do it - or they don’t have the confidence in themselves to do it -

So - they make an excuse for their disobedience by convincing themselves that they really just don’t know for sure what God wants them to do.

Am I getting close to anyone here?

Where would we be without the obedience of Jesus?

Philippians 2:7-8 - Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;

he took the humble position of a slave

and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,

he humbled himself in obedience to God

and died a criminal’s death on a cross.

Here’s what we know about obedience:

* **Obedience requires personal involvement.**

If you’re going to obey you’re going to have to do something. You can’t do nothing. You can’t just sit back and watch others be involved.

Dissatisfaction in any relationship, whether it be a family, or at work, or in church often comes when we are focused on ourselves and what we want.

Everything will never be how we want it in every way - we have to focus on serving others. If you don’t know Christ yet - we want you to come to know Christ - it is the greatest relationship in the world!

If you do know Christ - we want you to mature - find out what God wants you to do - and get involved in doing that - then you will find great satisfaction - our commitment is not dependent on how things go for us - our commitment is to sacrifice in obedience to see others come to know Him!

* **Obedience requires Christlike unselfishness.**

This goes right along with what I was just saying.

Christ was not thinking of Himself and what He wanted when He went to the cross.

Everyone complaining among the Israelites leaving Egypt were only thinking of themselves - they were dissatisfied - unhappy -

Obeying God’s Word in serving others turns all of that around!

**- Obedience results in ultimate happiness.**

This is where it’s at! We find out what God wants - through His Word - through teaching - learning to listen to the Holy Spirit - we do that and we are going to find contentment!

It’s not about us - it can’t be about us - it’s about serving others! That’s where real joy comes!

**> God knows the end of the story.**

Exodus 4:21-23 - And the Lord told Moses, “When you arrive back in Egypt, go to Pharaoh and perform all the miracles I have empowered you to do. But I will harden his heart so he will refuse to let the people go. Then you will tell him, ‘This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son. I commanded you, “Let my son go, so he can worship me.” But since you have refused, I will now kill your firstborn son!’”

God knows what is going to happen way into the future!

We haven’t even gotten to these passages yet - but Moses is going to go back to Egypt-

* Tell the Pharoah to let the people go -
* He is going to say, “No.”
* Moses is going to stick his walking stick in the Nile River and all the water of Egypt is going to turn into blood -
* Moses is going to say, “How about now?”
* Pharaoh is going to say, “No!”
* Frogs … “Take them away!” - “When?” - “Tomorrow!” - I’ve never understood that -
* How about now?
* No.
* Dust is going to turn into gnats … this is the worst picnic you’ve ever been to!
* How about now?
* No!
* Flies - our house in Pittsboro …
* How about now?
* No!
* Livestock die
* Boils
* Hail destroys crops
* Locusts eats any remaining crops
* Land turns to darkness …
* Stil no
* This is when God will take the firstborn children of Egypt -

This is horrible - but God provided a way out … Passover … lamb … blood …

God will do whatever He has to do to get His people free!

He loves you that much as well! He will do whatever He has to do to get you free!

Not a very pleasant thought that God says He’s going to kill firstborn children - But God offered up His Son for our freedom!

The people of Israel were the people of God. That was the Old Covenant. He had made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob …

God keeps His word - no one nor nothing can stop God from keeping His word.

From the passage we are in today - all of this is in the future - but God knows the future!

He knows your future!

There is now a New Covenant - the New Covenant is in place because God gave the life of His son -

John 3:16-17 - For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

Luke 22:20 - After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.

The people of Egypt represent every force that opposes the plan of God.

God doesn’t want to kill anybody. God doesn’t want to judge anybody.

But - when we are the people of God - and when we are living in obedience to Him - He will fight for us. God will oppose those who oppose His plan -

Genesis 12:3 - I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt.

Exodus 14:14 - The Lord himself will fight for you.

Deuteronomy 1:30 - The Lord your God is going ahead of you. He will fight for you…

Deuteronomy 3:22 - …for the Lord your God will fight for you.

Deuteronomy 20:4 - For the Lord your God is going with you! He will fight for you against your enemies, and he will give you victory!’

Joshua 23:10 - Each one of you will put to flight a thousand of the enemy, for the Lord your God fights for you, just as he has promised.

Deuteronomy 1:30 - The Lord your God is going ahead of you. He will fight for you…

God knows the end of the story - He will fight for you!

**> We need to fully obey.**

Exodus 4:24-26 - On the way to Egypt, at a place where Moses and his family had stopped for the night, the Lord confronted him and was about to kill him. But Moses’ wife, Zipporah, took a flint knife and circumcised her son. She touched his feet with the foreskin and said, “Now you are a bridegroom of blood to me.” (When she said “a bridegroom of blood,” she was referring to the circumcision.) After that, the Lord left him alone.

This is a weird part of the story -

Circumcision … was the sign of God’s covenant with His Old Covenant people -

Aren’t you glad we have a New Covenant now?

This started with Abraham - Abraham had to go through circumcision as an adult - most were circumcised at 8 days - many baby boys today are still circumcised - but to be circumcised as an adult …

So - this was the sign of God’s covenant -

Why?

Read The Mystery and the Masterpiece - Chapter 2 - I can’t get into all of this today -

God required this from His people in the Old Covenant -

Many scholars believe that since Moses was an Israelite and his wife was not, his wife won the argument as to whether or not this baby was going to have to go through this painful practice of circumcision. She did not see the purpose and either Moses failed to see it also, or he failed to stand up for the purpose of God.

Since the people of Israel were considered to be in covenant with God through circumcision, how could Moses lead these people if he had not circumcised his own son?

He was being obedient now - though he had protested … he was being obedient now to go to Egypt and confront Pharaoh - tell him to set the people free - but he was not living in FULL OBEDIENCE!

Why was this so important?

It is important and crucial because circumcision was more than just a unique and unusual practice. It was a sign of a blood covenant, required because being in covenant with God requires blood.

When Moses’ wife finally gave in to save Moses life, and threw the bloody skin at her husband - “She purchased his life by the blood of her son; she received him back, as it were, from the dead, and married him anew; he was, in fact, a bridegroom of blood to her.” - Kurtz in Keil & Delitzsch

In Romans, Paul wrote that now we are circumcised in our hearts because Jesus bled for us!

Romans 2:28-29 - For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit.

Today - under the New Covenant - it is not a matter of skin being cut away from our body - it is a matter of sin being cut away from our heart. That is made possible because Jesus shed His blood for us on the cross!

We need to obey - God knows the end of the story - We need to FULLY obey - as a response to His love for us.

**> Don’t do it alone.**

Exodus 4:27-31 - Now the Lord had said to Aaron, “Go out into the wilderness to meet Moses.” So Aaron went and met Moses at the mountain of God, and he embraced him. Moses then told Aaron everything the Lord had commanded him to say. And he told him about the miraculous signs the Lord had commanded him to perform.

 Then Moses and Aaron returned to Egypt and called all the elders of Israel together. Aaron told them everything the Lord had told Moses, and Moses performed the miraculous signs as they watched. Then the people of Israel were convinced that the Lord had sent Moses and Aaron. When they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

God sent Aaron to be with Moses -

Then they went to the elders -

We serve God together and we worship God together.

When Adam was the only person on the planet God said, “It’s not good for man to be alone.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10,12 - Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble… A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

Everywhere you look in the Bible, those who served God did so in partnership with others.

Moses had Aaron -

* Later he would have Joshua
* David had Jonathan
* Elijah had Elisha

Luke 10:1 - The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit.

Mark 6:7 - And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two…

After Jesus left and the Church grew, they continued to follow this pattern.

* Paul & Barnabas
* Barnabas & Mark
* Paul & Silas
* Peter & Mark
* Paul & Titus
* Paul and Luke

In all of Paul’s letters, he has a partner with him.

The Church works together! We are not called to serve alone!

God’s got a plan for your life!

He wants you to get started.

Realize you are called -

And don’t hesitate - just get to it!

Today is Palm Sunday …

I see Jesus doing what we have been talking about in this series -

* He knew God’s plan (Msg 1)
* He Acted according to that plan (Msg 2)
* He accepted God’s call (knew who He was, ultimately the Garden prayer, Thy Will)
* He obeyed

Philippians 2:5-11 - You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.

 When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross.

 Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

What’s your next step?

Invitation -

**Blessing:**

May God give you a spirit of obedience. May God give you a deep desire in your heart to know exactly what He wants you to do - and a great eagerness to do it.

May you be set free from a spirit of doubt and hesitation. May you be set free from the tyranny of making excuses. I bless you to get personally involved in God’s work - in bringing others to Him - giving of yourself unselfishly - so that you can experience the complete satisfaction God has for you.

May you be delivered from the bondage and unhappiness that selfishness brings.

May you be blessed to find peace in the knowledge that God knows your future - and He is on your side - and He will fight for you.

May you be blessed to know that you do not serve Him alone. He has given us to one another - to love one another - to serve one another - to fight for one another’s good - not just our own.