

When Faith Leads to Failure

Exodus 4:29-31; 5:1-4, 6-9, 20-23; 6:1-8

Pastor Art Hunt

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Big Picture Truth: When faithful obedience leads to failure, believers need a renewed vision of God.

Reflection #1: GOD'S CALL OFTEN BEGINS WITH SOME INITIAL SUCCESS.

Reflection #2: WHEN WE OBEY GOD'S CALLING, OUR FAITH IS USUALLY TESTED.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace . . . ¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 1 Peter 4:10, 12 (English Standard Version)

Reflection #3: FAILURE SOMETIMES HAPPENS BECAUSE, THOUGH WE POSSESS A WORD AND CALLING FROM GOD, WE DO NOT FULLY OBEY THAT WORD AND CALLING.

- What God told Moses to say to Pharaoh: *“The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us, and now, please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.”* Exodus 3:18b (ESV)
- What Moses actually said to Pharaoh: *“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’”* Exodus 5:1 (ESV)

Believers need to see God’s “eternal wisdom presiding in absolute rightness and justice over everything, including what sinners do in their culpability (Acts 2:23) and what happens in a world of sin. Our God is the ‘Father who is over all [present and sovereign] and through all and in all [working perfectly, wisely, justly, lovingly, powerfully]’ (Ephesians 4:6). God’s absolute sovereignty never excuses . . . our sin, but neither is he ever knocked off course by our sin but rather works his purpose out, as one year succeeds the next. (From *The Message of Exodus* by J. A. Motyer, pg. 102)

Reflection #4: OUR FAILURE IS NOT THE LAST WORD IF IT LEADS US TO A RENEWED VISION OF GOD.

“I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm . . . ⁷I will take you to be my people.” Exodus 6:6-7a (ESV)