

The Reluctance to Go

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[0 : 00] skill skill All right, Exodus chapter 4.

Exodus chapter 4, if you've got your Bibles, I don't know about you, that last song, it is one of my favorite, favorite, favorite songs. I mean, all the songs tonight, I mean, really spoke to the same theme of how God is for us, God is with us.

The battle is already his. We're fighting a battle he's already won. And that's such an appropriate message for the book of Exodus. As we see tonight, Moses is reluctant to be a part of something God has already declared victorious.

And that is often something that is true in our own life. And so we've been in this series now, I think this is the sixth week through the book of Exodus, and I love teaching this book. I trust it has been an encouragement to you.

One of the most encouraging things that people have said to me in this study thus far is how you struggle finding the Old Testament relevant to you, and just already in a few weeks, you have seen how relevant the book of Exodus is to your life.

[1 : 54] And so that means a lot to me because I want to preach the book faithfully, but also in a way that really resonates with what you're dealing with every day and myself as well. So let's dive in.

We're going to look at a pretty big section tonight. I'm making up for last week. Last week we did three verses. So now I'm going to do like 107. No, not that many, not that many. But actually the passage we're going to cover starts in chapter three all the way through a section of chapter four. But for our scripture reading, we're just going to read chapter four beginning at verse one down through 13. So if you're able to stand, please do so as we honor the reading of God's word.

Exodus chapter four and verse one says, Moses answered, but behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice for they're going to say, the Lord did not appear to you.

And the Lord said to him, what's in your hand? And he said, a staff. And he said, we'll throw it on the ground. So he threw it on the ground and it became a serpent. And Moses ran from it as any godly person would.

[3 : 00] Verse four. But the Lord said to Moses, put out your hand and catch it by the tail. And so he put out his hand and caught it. And it became a staff in his hand that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, he has appeared to you.

And again, the Lord said to him, put your hand inside your cloak. And he put his hand inside his cloak. And when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow.

And God said, put your hand back inside your cloak. And so he put his hand back inside his cloak. And when he did and pulled it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh.

If they will not believe you, God said, or listen to the first sign, they may believe the latter sign. And if they will not believe even these two signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground.

And the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground. But Moses said to the Lord, oh, my Lord, I'm not eloquent.

[4 : 09] Neither in the past, since you have spoken to your servant, I'm slow of speech and of tongue. And the Lord said to him, who has made man's mouth?

Who makes him mute or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.

But he said, oh, my Lord, please, please send someone else. Let's pray. The Lord helped me tonight.

Teach your word. Help all of us listen to your voice as you speak to us through your word. And what I do pray that tonight would be a great exodus in our own heart, a healing as you come and you talk to us and you let your word do what your word does in us.

And I pray this all to the glory of one name, and that name is the name of Jesus. And we pray it in his name and God's people said, amen. You can be seated. Well, in the world of mixed martial arts, there's a few names that are respected and as admired as Anderson Silva.

[5 : 22] Silva was born in Brazil. He became a legendary name in UFC. I don't know if any of you are UFC fans, but he is by far one of the legendary names of the sports.

He dominated the middleweight division. He holds the record for the longest reigning champ in UFC history. And he also has the most consecutive wins of anybody in UFC history.

An astounding 16, solidifying his status as one of the greatest fighters to ever step foot in the octagon. But a few years ago, Silva faced one of his biggest opponents, one of the biggest opponents of his career, and it didn't happen inside the ring.

You see, every UFC fighter goes through a series of defining moments, moments that can really define their career. It may be the knockout.

It may be the decision. It might be a suspension. And there's one of those experiences that every single fighter at some point is going to have to face.

[6 : 32] The injury. It was December 2013. Silva faced off against Chris Weidman. It was actually a rematch because Weidman had taken the title from him at his first loss in seven years.

And Silva wanted to regain the crown. One minute into the second round, as Weidman blocked one of Silva's left leg kicks, the force of the impact was so great, it snapped Silva's leg in half.

I'm not going to show you pictures because some of you would be grossed out by this and not eat for a week. But literally, you can see his leg just dangling. In fact, it was considered and is considered one of the most gruesome injuries in all of MMA.

Hours later, he would undergo surgery to insert a titanium rod in his leg to stabilize the fracture. And now came his biggest challenge of his entire career.

And it was this. Would he ever get back in the ring again? Would he ever get back in the ring again? Because in addition to the excruciating pain of rehab, Silva noticed that his body started responding in ways it had never responded before.

[8 : 00] He struggled to walk. In fact, he said it was like my brain didn't trust my leg to hold up under the pressure. And then when he started training again, his body began to compensate to keep from getting injured again.

And then there was the mental challenge when he started to kick again for the first time. The whole time he's thinking, is my leg, is the rod, is the bone going to hold up?

You see, Silva's battle was more than a broken leg. It was a broken spirit that made him reluctant to get back in the ring.

One sports psychologist wrote this, quote, listen, for many athletes, coming back from a serious sports-related injury is a terrifying ordeal.

They've been cleared to play physically, but listen, their fear of suffering another injury can be debilitating. These fears can cause complications with their return to play.

[9 : 13] Many suffer from confusion, anxiety, anger, shame, and guilt. And you know what that's like, don't you?

You know what that's like, don't you? I'm not talking about the reluctance of getting back in the ring of UFC. I'm talking about the reluctance of getting back in the ring of life.

I'm talking to you tonight, and I'm talking to me tonight. All of us at one point have faced one of life's most difficult opponents, the injury.

The injury. And it may not have been physical. It may have been that thing that someone said. It may have been the thing that someone did. It might have been the rejection that you felt. It might have been the hurt that you endured.

It might have been the pain that you experienced. It might have been the accident. But I know this. You went through the injury, and as a result of that, you begin to think or say things like, I will never be in a relationship again.

[10 : 21] I am done trying to have children. I will never go back in the water. I don't trust anybody.

I'm not getting back on. And I'm never going back to church. One thing I know that is true for all of us is that we are reluctant to get back in the ring after the injury.

Amen? And in Exodus chapter 4, listen, so is Moses. I mean, as we come to Exodus chapter 4, I mean, amazing things.
Amazing things have happened, right? I mean, if you go back to chapter 3, listen, listen, listen. After 400 years of silence, God speaks.
And God does not just speak. God gives an emancipation proclamation to the people of Israel. Look at it in chapter 3 and verse 7. Now that's fantastic news if you're an Israelite.
[11:47] Amen? Freedom is coming. No more oppression. God has declared he is going to set his people free. That's fantastic news.

And the news keeps getting better. Because not only is God going to set his people free, he's going to take this guy by the name of Moses, who was once at the high point of his game, who was once the prince of Egypt, but he's fallen on hard times.

He went from riches to rags, and he's been for 40 years a nobody watching sheep for his father-in-law, and God gives him a second chance.

Verse 10. Look at it. Oh, this is good news. Come, I will send, say it, faith family, you to Moses, that who? You may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

Oh, I'm going to set my people free, and I'm going to use Moses to do it. And the news keeps getting better. Because all of this then gets backed up by some guarantees, some promises.

[12:57] Look at them in verse 17 of chapter 3. And I, say it, promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.

And they will listen to your voice. You and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us, and now let us go on a three-day journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

And so God says, Listen, I promise I'm going to do this. I'm going to set them free. Moses, you're the man. And I'm going to make sure it happens. Now listen, Egypt's not going to like it.

They're not going to be fond of this idea of just letting you go. And so look what I'm going to do, verse 20. I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it after that he will let you go.

Do you see all the promises in those verses? It's all on God. I'm doing this. I'm going to make sure this happens. Moses, you don't have to worry about it. I'm going to take care of it. Now we all know this. A promise is only as good as the one who makes it.

[14:10] A guarantee is only as good as the one who provides it. So look at verse 14. Who is the one providing all of these promises? And God said to Moses, say it, faith family.

I am who I am. Now put it all together. Does it get any better than this? I mean, Israel is going to be set free. Moses is going to be the man.

It's all guaranteed by God. What God? The true eternal creator God that is the essence of all reality. This is the opportunity of a lifetime.

I mean, this is the moment you wait for. In fact, as I was preparing all this and putting all this together, I'm thinking like, what would the soundtrack be at this point in the book of Exodus? Like, you know, you got to have a soundtrack.

You got to have something playing in the background. So I'm thinking, what would go with this? And I thought of a few options. Maybe for example, like this. You got one opportunity, man.

[15:18] Don't blow it. I mean, maybe you aren't Eminem fans, but that's an appropriate soundtrack for this. And if you're not a big Eminem fan, that's fine. How about something like this? No Hamilton fans?

Anybody? I'm not throwing away my shot, man.

This is my opportunity. Let's go. Let's do this. So maybe you're not an Eminem fan. Maybe you're not a Hamilton fan. When all else fails, just go with it. God's people applauded.

I love it. I think all of those would be appropriate soundtracks for this moment in Exodus.

I mean, this is your opportunity. Don't blow your shot. Let's go. Rise up. Let's do this. Pharaoh, here we come. And we get, instead, this.

[16:41] Verse 1, chapter 4. Moses answered to all this. They're not going to believe me. And they're not going to listen to my voice.

In fact, God, I already know what they're going to say. What they're going to say is, the Lord did not appear to you. Wah, wah.

Wah. Wah. It's like, talk about Debbie Downer. I mean, like, not even the Rocky music could cheer you up, Moses. Like, come on, buddy. Like, he sounds like this kid pouting and kicking dirt. Like, nobody's going to listen to me. And they're not going to believe in me. And they won't even think you appeared to me. He's reluctant. He's reluctant to step in the ring. He's reluctant to take on this mission. He's absolutely convinced that the people of Israel are not going to believe him. And they're not going to follow him. And now, let's be fair. Let's cut Moses a little bit of slack here.

[17 : 43] Because if we're honest, right, the message that he's going to deliver to Israel is going to sound a little bit crazy. Can you imagine if you were the first person Moses told about that?

Yeah, God just talked to me. It's a burning bush. Sure he did. Moses, we think maybe you've been burning some bush.

It's true, right? I mean, come on. Moses is not wrong. Moses is not wrong. This is going to be a really, really hard sell. Like, here, Israel, here's what I want you to know.

I was herding some sheep. And then I saw this bush. And it was burning. But it wasn't like on fire. I mean, what I mean is it was burning but not being consumed. And in this burning bush that was on fire but not being consumed, there was like this angel.

And the angel spoke. But it wasn't just an angel. It was actually the voice of God. I guess what I'm trying to say is I encountered God in a burning bush. And he wants us to go tell Pharaoh that we're going to be free.

[18 : 41] And all God's people said, Boy, you must be outside your mind. You're crazy, Moses. So there's a sense in which I understand why Moses feels this way.

Like, they're not going to believe me. They're not going to listen to me. They're going to say you didn't appear to me. But here's my point. Listen, listen, listen. If this was the only moment of reluctance, I'd buy into that.

But it isn't. It's not the first time and it's not the last time. This is not a one-time reaction. Listen, earlier in Exodus chapter 3, what did Moses say in verse 11?

Look at it here, verse 11. But Moses said to God, say it, Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt? Who am I to do this?

I'm so past my prime. I'm too old. And you just want to say, Whoa, whoa, whoa, buddy. Listen, how about we reverse that phrase, right? Notice this on the screen.

[19 : 44] This will preach. How about instead of focusing on who am I, how about you start focusing on I am, right? Like, readjust the phrase. It's not who am I.

It's I'm going in the name of I am. That's really all that matters. But Moses here is resistant. He doesn't think he's qualified for the task.

But notice that it's not just chapter 3, verse 11. It's not just chapter 4 and verse 1. Look what happens again in chapter 4, verse 10. Moses said to the Lord, Oh, my Lord.

Now he's shifted to a different excuse. I'm not very eloquent. I mean, in the past or since you've spoken in your servant, like, I'm slow of speech and of tongue.

I don't have the skill. I'm not only not qualified, chapter 3, verse 11. Not only will the people not listen, chapter 4, verse 1. But I'm not much of a public speaker.

[20 : 40] And it continues. And listen, by the way, we're skipping that in all the in-between, God does revelation after revelation, miracle after miracle, promise after promise, and we still get this.

But he said, Oh, my Lord, here am I. Send somebody else.

I don't want to do this. I don't want to get in the ring. And there's a point, four times. Four times. There's a point that you, as the reader, read through this and you begin to say, as you would with any kind of repetitive behavior like this, you begin to say, there's something else going on here. There's something deeper. There's clearly something underneath the surface that has Moses gripped in fear.

[21 : 53] Right? Are you with me? It isn't a one-time thing. It's over and over and over and over again. And it's clearly not the fault of God's.

I mean, God has revealed his name. God has given promise after promise. God has given miraculous sign after miraculous sign. And still, he's reluctant to go.

And I, as I study this, I want to stop and say, What is it? What's going on here? Moses, why are you so reluctant? Why are you so afraid to get into the ring?

And the answer is this, the same reason you won't get back in the ring. It's the injury. You say injury. There's no evidence in the text anywhere that Moses is injured. Oh, sure there is. Look at this on the screen. It's not that Moses has a fractured limb. It's that Moses has a fractured heart.

[22 : 58] And what clicked with me as I studied this text over and over again was the context. Are you listening to me?

What's the context? Almost nobody mentions this. I don't hear anybody talk about this. But I saw it. As I studied the passage, I saw it. The context here is not Moses going to Egypt yet.

Yet, the context, and we'll see it again as we work through the verses in just a moment, it's not him going to Egypt yet. It's him going back to his own people.

And what happened the last time he went back to his own people? Here's what happened. Chapter 2, verse 11.

And one day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to say it. To his people. And he looked on what? Their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of, say it, his people.

[24 : 07] He looked this way and that, seeing no one. He struck down the Egyptian and hit him in the sand. He murdered the man. And when he went out the next day, behold, there were two Hebrews, his people that were struggling together.

And he said to the man in the wrong, why do you strike your companion? And he answered, saying to Moses, who made you a prince or judge over us?

Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian? And Moses was, everybody say it, afraid. and he thought, surely the thing is known.

And it hit me. The last time Moses was with Israel, they rejected him. He stuck out his neck to save a fellow Hebrew.

He saw their burdens, just like Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. He saw their burden. He tried to help a brother. He sacrificed his own position in Egypt.

[25 : 19] And what did he get for it? Rejection. He got stabbed in the heart. And I think Moses, in Exodus 4, is absolutely convinced that if they rejected his authority then, they're going to reject his authority now.

So why not just live in isolation in Midian? It's far better than getting back in the ring. And listen to me, faith family, for 40 years, for 40 years, for 40 years, Moses has lived with the fact that he not only murdered a man, but his very own people turned on him.

This isn't about going to Egypt yet. This is about going back to those people and dealing with the very ones that hurt him, that injured him, that questioned him, that doubted him.

And here's what God is doing. Oh man, will this preach? Look at it here on the screen. God's not only calling Moses to go forward to Egypt, he's calling Moses to go back to Israel.

And Moses has every reason in his mind totally justified why that is the most insane idea God could ever come up with. Go Moses.

[26 : 45] Who am I? I mean, who am I? I'm so old, I'm past my prime. I mean, really, there's got to be somebody better that could do this. Go Moses. But they're not going to listen to me. They won't even believe me. They'll say that you didn't appear to me.

Go Moses. But I'm not a very good speaker. I mean, maybe if you could enroll me in like a public speaking course at the U, maybe that would... Go Moses. I told you, send somebody else.

I'm not getting back in a relationship. I'm not going to trust again. I'm not getting back in that ring. And how many times do I have to tell you?

This is a reluctant, resistant, defiant prophet. And if you think he's overreacting, all it means is you've never been injured.

If you think he's overreacting, if you think he's lost his mind, it's because you've never been hurt. And Moses wants to give every excuse he can possibly make to not have to go back.

[27 : 57] Are we being real? And you said Exodus wasn't relevant? Hello. There have been times when we have stepped out and tried to lead.

We've tried to do the right thing. We've gotten involved and we've been rejected. Our friendship questioned. Our authority rejected. Our character doubted. Our motives judged.

And just like Moses, we fled to Midian. And for some of us, we've been there 40 years. And we'd much rather remain in Midian than go back to Israel.

And here's what Moses has got to learn. And here's what you got to learn. Here's what I got to learn. I'm still learning this. You're still learning this. Moses is still learning this. And here it is. Listen, you're not always going to be able to trust people.

Amen? But you can't always trust God. You're not always going to be able to trust people, but you can always trust God.

[29 : 08] And here's why I say that. Because do you know how God responds to Moses? Now let's be fair. God does eventually get righteously angry with Moses. Wouldn't you? Not only would I, I wouldn't even respond the way God responds.

My response, by the way, I often read the Bible and I think I wouldn't respond that way when I look at how God responds. And I'm so thankful I'm not God. And all God's people said, amen, amen. Because I'd be like, next! Next! Like, look at everything I've done for you, buddy. And you still don't want to go? Fine. I'll find somebody else.

I don't need you. And God would be right. But that's not what God does. What God does is He gives Moses three signs. And it's very important for us to know that these signs that God gives Moses are meant to, listen, listen, let's take it in context, these signs are meant to assure Moses, but even more than that, to assure Israel that Moses is the man.

Listen, there are assurances that let him know he can go back. That he can go back and face Israel. Here they are.

[30 : 22] The first one, I mean, the other thing God doesn't give me a vote is what these signs should be. Because I'd go earthquake, violent storm, mighty rushing wind.

It wouldn't be this one! Verse 2 of chapter 4. The Lord said to him, what's in your hand? And Moses said, a staff. And he said, well, throw it on the ground.

And he threw it on the ground and it became a snake. And Moses, in the most godly response, he made all chapter 4, ran from it. And the Lord said to Moses, but put your hand out and catch it by the tail.

And he put his hand out and he caught it. And it became a staff in his hand. That they, remember Israel, that Israel may believe that the Lord, the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has appeared to you.

So that's the reason for the assignment, that he's going back to Israel, not to Egypt yet. And so the first sign is crazy, right? It's, he turns his staff, his shepherd's staff, into a snake.

[31 : 22] And listen, all God's people hate snakes. If you hate, if you love snakes, I am concerned about your eternity. I mean, I really am. I'm really concerned about your eternity if you like snakes.

Because it's clear the right response is to run! But God turns his staff into a snake and then he does something even more crazy.

He says, pick it up by the tail. No chance. There's just no way that's happening. Why? Because I know this from growing up in Tennessee, the last place you grab a snake is by the tail.

Because it's easier to bite you. Why is God doing this? Was this random? Was this sign random? Let me ask a different question. Does God ever do random?

Of course he doesn't. What's behind this first sign? There's two things. One is lesser and the other is greater. The lesser is this, kind of the small scale, is God is making Moses face fear.

[32 : 23] I mean, he's afraid to go back. In fact, we read in verse 2 that after he knew this thing, what did it say? He was afraid and he ran to Midian. And so, God here is making Moses face his fear.

This is a lesson in faith and courage. Will you do what I asked you to do even if it's risky? Like, grab a snake by its tail. That's the small level.

The bigger level is this, and it's very obvious if you know anything about the history, and that is that this is a sign to Moses and ultimately to Israel that Moses is the man, listen, to lead them out of Egypt.

Why? Because snakes are a symbol of Egyptian authority. In fact, the very headdress of the Pharaoh is a cobra.

And so, one of the very icons and symbols of Egypt was this snake. And so, the idea of watching this staff turn into a snake and Moses being able to pick up a snake and it becomes a staff, the thing that will lead them out of Egypt is a sign of God's power over the Egyptian gods.

[33 : 34] Moses is the man and you're gonna prove this by this sign. And if they won't listen to you, here's the second sign. He plays a little game of hokey pokey, right?

Look at chapter 4 and verse 6. It's right here in the Bible. Again, the Lord said, put your hand inside your cloak. And he put his hand inside his cloak and he took it out and behold, it was leprous like snow.

And then he said, put your hand back inside your cloak. And so, he put his hand back inside his cloak and when he took it out, behold, it was like the rest of his flesh, right? Put your right hand in, take your right hand out, do the hokey pokey and turn yourself about and look, you have a leprous hand.

Ah! Like, you gotta just think, like sometimes I just wonder, is God just messing with Moses in a sense? Like, he's already fragile. Like, I don't wanna go do this thing.

And then it's like, ah, snake! Okay, I put my hand in, ah, I got a leprosy! Like, there's a point in which you gotta just think, God is totally up there being like, I got you, bro. I'm totally messing with your fragile heart.

[34 : 37] But clearly, there's a bigger sign to this than just that. Aside from this being a startling experience, no doubt, for Moses, what is this a sign of? Remember, remember, these are signs given to Israel.

Signs of assurance. The first was authority over Egyptian gods. The second is a sign of, listen, restoration. You're hurting.

I've heard your cries for healing. And I'm gonna heal you. I'm gonna restore you. I'm going to take you to a place of flourishing.

That's what's seen in the sign of leprosy that then gets healed. It's a sign for Israel to be assured they will be restored. And then finally, if those two don't work, do this.

Verse 9. If they'll not believe even those two signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile, pour it on the ground, and the water that you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.

[35 : 40] This one is maybe the easiest to understand because it's a foreshadowing of what? The first plague. What we need to know contextually here is this. The Nile was the most sacred thing in all of Egypt.

In fact, many even believed it was like a god. It was a source of wealth, a source of life. The Nile was everything. And so this imagery of taking water from the Nile and watching it become blood is another sign of God's ultimate authority of bringing Egypt to a place of death and destruction. Moses is my man and I'm going to prove it to my people through these signs of assurances that they can trust and believe I'm going to do what I said.

I'm going to do what I said I'm going to do. Amen? Don't you love the book of Exodus? Oh my goodness. Are you kidding me? You ready for two more hours?

Let's go! How about let's stop for a moment and just say what should we learn from this? What should we learn from this? A few points of application and we'll close.

[36 : 59] Number one, I think we learn from this that sometimes you have to go back before you go forward. You have to deal with your injury. You have to deal with the rejection.

You have to deal with the hurt. There may be some of you here tonight like you've just like stuffed that down and you don't deal with it. And Moses has to go to Israel before he can go to Egypt.

And so I don't know what that injury, the accident, the whatever it is for you, but let the Lord deal with you and that hurt tonight and let him bring healing in your life.

You can't ignore that. Secondly, is the strength to overcome our fears is the power of God. The strength to overcome our fears is the power of God.

I say that because none of the assurances that God gives Moses are about Moses. Right? None of this is look what Moses can do. Like the approach isn't, listen, listen, listen, just go to Israel and show them that really cool magic trick that you do.

[38 : 04] You know the one with the behind the ear and the coin? Yeah, do that one. It's not anything about Moses. This is God saying this is what I'm going to do. Okay? These are the signs I'm going to give.

Moses, the source of your strength will be in you. It's going to be in my power. I'm not a good speaker. Who made man's mouth? Moses, I'm going to be your mouth.

I don't need your mouth. Did you see? So I don't know what it is that you're afraid of and the excuses that you're giving to avoid the thing. But the power you're going to find to overcome the fear is when you realize how powerful your God is.

And if he's for you, no one can be against you. You see, that's the source of our strength and that's what Moses has got to learn. Listen, the whole first chapters of Exodus are all about the power and glory of God.

Nobody's impressed with Moses or Israel or Egypt. We are impressed with God. Third, third, the freedom to be honest about our struggle.

[39 : 14] And you may say, where in the world are you getting that? And sometimes you wonder where these, you know, these messages come about through all week of just pouring over the text and there's times I can just be, like literally, this is where this point came from.

I was driving down the road and this is what hit me. This is what hit me. You ready? Because you're wondering where in the world I got this from the text. It's not a trick question but I want you to answer it out loud.

Who is reluctant in Exodus chapter 4? Moses. Told you it wasn't a trick question. Say it again. Who is reluctant over and over and over again in Exodus 3 and 4?

Who wrote Exodus? You get it? Moses could have left all this out.

Or he could have painted a little different story. The fish wasn't this big. It was really this big. Yeah, there was a time that God came to me and spoke to me in a bush and he said, I want you to go to Egypt and we're going to let my people go and you know what my response was?

[40 : 21] Here am I. Send me. And it was awesome. And the crowd went wild. And there was rocky music in the back.

Instead, Moses lets you in on his reluctance. Here's what Moses is saying to the reader. I was terrified to go.

And I came up with every excuse in the book. And what this would do for the cult, this is the culture we fight for here at Fate Family. We talk about it's okay to not be okay.

Like, to be Moses here, you don't have to come across as a super Christian because there isn't one. The only righteousness you have is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

So you don't have to put on a front. You can actually say, you know what, God really was calling me to do this and I resisted for a long time. and nobody here is going to judge you.

[41 : 25] We're going to understand because we're all reluctant to go sometimes as well. Amen?

So I love that this story is about the guy writing the story, revealing to us his faults and weaknesses.

Finally, remember, remember, and I would encourage you to do this, remember the signs of assurance that God has given you. Remember the signs of assurance that God has given you. That is, those moments when God reminds you of his presence.

And maybe it's like you're reading through the Psalms and what was foggy becomes clear or you had a conversation with someone and that conversation was just exactly what you needed in that moment and it encouraged, you know what I'm talking about?

You know those like stones of assurance that God gives you throughout your journey and what you want to do is you want to collect those stones that you can look back on when you're reluctant, discouraged, or afraid and just say, you know what?

God has proven himself time and time again that he's never forsaken me. Right now, I feel alone. Right now, I don't understand it. Right now, it's all a fog but here's what these signs and they won't always be snakes and leprous hands but there are signs of assurance that God has given us that he's with you.

[42 : 49] He's with you and he's not going anywhere and if you need a sign, I'll give you the greatest sign. In fact, Moses, listen, Moses got a snake, a leprous hand and blood.

Let me give you a greater sign. The one who defeated the serpent, the one who heals the lepers and the one by his own blood defeated death on a cross.

the greatest sign you need is the greatest sign you already have and that's the person of Jesus Christ. So when you feel afraid and you feel paralyzed, go to the cross and the empty tomb and see what God has done for you and his promise to always be with you.

So Faith Family, the only way I ask you tonight, what are you reluctant about? What are you reluctant about? Like Silva, what's the injury or the fear that sometimes keeps you from getting back in the ring?

You do realize that Moses is not the only reluctant person to do what God had called him to do. I close by asking you to consider Gethsemane.

[44 : 11] When Jesus was reluctant to go to the cross, in fact, you know this, Jesus even said, can this cup pass? But Jesus was not reluctant because he was afraid of being rejected by man.

Jesus was reluctant because he knew he would be rejected by the Father. But unlike Moses, and here's the good news of the gospel, are you ready?

Unlike Moses, Jesus didn't say, Father, find someone else. Jesus said, Father, your will, not mine. Jesus and as a result of that, Jesus not only got in the ring, Jesus went to the cross and three days later began the greatest exodus the world has ever known.

And God's people said, Amen. Amen. Let's pray. Amen. Lord, thank you for the book of Exodus and thank you for destroying any idea that it is not relevant to us.

[45 : 31] Because I'm certain this room is full of people like Moses who've been injured in the battle, who've been rejected, who've been hurt.

and like we might even be here publicly around people and in Midian in our heart.

And you're inviting us to come to you with our hurts and our fears and all of our reluctance to go and to let you begin to heal us.

And we thank you for that grace because Lord, it's very easy. It would be very easy and rightly so for you to just overlook us and use someone far more obedient.

But what has been established has not been our obedience. It has been the obedience of your son who sympathizes with our weakness and understands our reluctance.

[46 : 46] But Jesus did everything the Father wanted him to do for all of us who haven't. And it's by that grace tonight that we really can find healing and a second chance and a new opportunity to be on this mission.

Help us now as we enter into a time of remembrance as we go to the cross in our minds as we think about how even though our Savior was reluctant how he wanted the cup to pass his commitment was to the Father's will.

And that's good news for Moses. and for all of us who are reluctant. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen.