

Exodus 020  
Power Through Weakness  
Exodus 6:28-30  
October 19, 2025  
Dr. Andy Woods

Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them to Exodus 6:28-30, as we continue our verse-by-verse teaching through the Book of Exodus. The title of our message this morning is "Power in Weakness." Maybe you feel weak this morning. You are in a good place, as we are going to see.

| Exodus Structure/Outline |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ■                        | Redemption (1–18)               |
| ◆                        | Redemption (1:1–12:30)          |
| ◆                        | Liberation (12:31–15:21)        |
| ◆                        | Preservation (15:22–18:27)      |
| ■                        | Mosaic Covenant (19–40)         |
| ◆                        | Law (19–24)                     |
| ◆                        | Tabernacle instructions (25–31) |
| ◆                        | Apostasy (32–34)                |
| ◆                        | Tabernacle building (35–40)     |

The first section of the book is dealing with God's redemption of a nation. He is redeeming the nation of Israel, which has been in Egyptian bondage for 400 years through a Pharaoh that knew not Joseph. God is doing a work through this man, Moses, bringing the nation out of that bondage. That is a type of what he has done for all of us as believers in Christ. We were steeped in our trespasses and sins in bondage to sin because of original sin, and God, through the work of a Passover lamb, Jesus Christ, has redeemed us. We have a picture of how that works personally, through a nation that God is using that same pattern in salvation history.

That is what the Book of Exodus is about. Exodus 1 is how they got enslaved. Exodus 2-4 is the development of the human instrument that God is going to use—a man named Moses, a man who is not without flaws. Let me let you in on a little secret: God does not use perfect people. Why is that? Because they do not exist, that is why—other than Jesus, of course. That encourages me because that means I can apply for the job. That should encourage you as well, because God will take you with foibles and all, and craft and mold your character in such a way that He will use you for His eternal purposes. Moses is the man that God is using.

In Exodus 5, Moses goes out. He is about the age of 80, and he has his first confrontation with Pharaoh, the political leader, political ruler of the known world at that

time. He tells Pharaoh exactly what God told him to say. Pharaoh does not cooperate. In fact, Pharaoh makes life worse for the Israelis being abused by the Egyptians. Moses is very discouraged by the time you get to Exodus 6, and it is in Exodus 6:1-7:7 that you read some of the most amazing ways that God encourages His discouraged servants.

#### God Reassures Moses (Exodus 6:1-30)

- I. Divine Reassurance (1-8)
- II. Diving Command (9;13)
- III. Moses' and Aaron's Levitical Heritage (14-27)
- IV. Conversation continued (28-30)
  - A. Timing (28)
  - B. Command (29)
    - 1. God's self identification
    - 2. Command given
  - C. Moses' excuses (30)
    - 1. Lack of eloquence
    - 2. Pharaoh will not listen

Have you ever been discouraged in life? Discouraged in doing the work of God? Discouraged and seeking to do what you think is right, but you are getting nothing but headaches and you feel like you are beating your head against a wall? These chapters, particularly Exodus 6, are just for us. He gives Moses divine reassurance through promises (Exodus 6:1-8); He reiterates the command that He wants Moses to follow (Exodus 6:9-13); then He reminds Moses who he is through a genealogy (Exodus 6:14-27). He comes from a special group of people, a special tribe—the Tribe of Levi.

Because Moses stands in that heritage, he has a special calling on his life, just like you have a genealogy. I am not talking about your genealogy that you try to figure out on an app somewhere. I am talking about your spiritual genealogy. We went over very quickly last time, 33 realities that God speaks about you. The moment you place your personal faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Ephesians 1:3 says that we have been "*blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,*" and you would not feel it and you would not know it unless you studied the Word of God. That becomes very helpful in times of discouragement. God reminds us who we are. God does this with Moses in a more limited sense (Exodus 6:14-27).

Now that that genealogy is finished, the conversation between God and Moses that was happening in Exodus 6:9-13 gets continued and concluded in Exodus 6:28-30, which we are going to look at this morning. We have number one, the timing of the conversation (Exodus 6:28); number two, the command of God (Exodus 6:29); then it ends with excuses, more excuses, from Moses as to why he is not qualified for this job (Exodus 6:30).

This is where Moses is going to learn that God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called. You take a look at the man that wrote the first Book of the New Testament, a man named Matthew, and you talk about a guy that was completely and totally unqualified to fulfill that spiritual priority of authoring a book that features the kingship and the regal authority and identity of Jesus Christ. Matthew was completely unqualified to write that book because he was a tax gatherer and as a tax gatherer, that meant that he was a traitor because he was working for Rome, the enemy occupier, to extract money from the Jewish people.

Beyond that, he was a thief. It was well known that a tax gatherer who was Israeli, working for Rome, could take whatever was necessary for Rome, but then they could take from the people whatever they wanted for their own personal enrichment. A tax gatherer in that day would be similar to how we would use the phrase, "That person is a pornographer. That person traffics in pornography," or "That person is running a child prostitution ring," or "That person is an abortionist," the lowest of the low on the social scale. Yet Jesus took Matthew, and forgave him of his sins (Matthew 9:9). He did not only save him from eternal damnation, which would have been enough, but he used him in a strategic way to write the very first book of the New Testament.

This is how God works. He does not call the qualified because there is no one qualified. He qualifies the called. That is what He is doing here with Moses, who had blood on his hands as a murderer. By the way, did you know that God's three top servants that I can think of in the Bible were all murderers? They all had blood on their hands. Who am I thinking of? I am thinking of David and Moses, and I am thinking of the Apostle Paul. If you take away Moses, you take away David, you take away the Apostle Paul, what do you have left of the Bible? Not much. Yet God took these people, forgave them, and then actually put them into the ministry.

It is the whole subject of grace, unmerited favor, that we have a very difficult time wrapping our heads around. Moses is having a very difficult time with it as well, saying he is not qualified. Here come the excuses in Exodus 6:30. Notice, if you will, Exodus 6:28, the timing of this conversation that is now reconvened:

*"Now it came about on the day when the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 6:28).*

This is a continuation from Exodus 6:13 which says:

*"Then the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, and gave them a charge to the sons of Israel and to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 6:13).*

That conversation was cut short because of the interjection of this genealogy giving us Moses' Levitical heritage. (Exodus 6:14-27). Now the conversation between God and Moses reconvenes, and it picks up here as God gives Moses a command. The command is in Exodus 6:29:

*"That the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'I am the Lord; speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak to you'" (Exodus 6:29).*

You will notice that God calls Himself the "I AM"—"I am the Lord." If your boss is the "I AM" the eternally existent One, what excuses could you have? I remember when I was younger in the Lord, I was thinking about attending seminary. I was under somebody that was encouraging me to go to seminary. I was working as a lay leader in a church there in California. I would go into his office and he would talk to me and say, "When are you going to enroll in seminary?" I was hemming and hawing. At the time I kept using money as an excuse, because I did not really have two nickels to rub together. Of course, today I am in the big time. I have three nickels that I can rub together.

I kept saying, "I just do not have the finances and I do not have the money to go to seminary." He said something that struck me right between the eyes. There was not much of an answer for that. He said, "Lack of money is never an excuse for a Christian, because God is your provider." That was like, ouch. I was not seeing God as the all powerful One, the self-existent One that can finance anything He wants done. I was just waffling back and forth in unbelief.

Sometimes we forget this. We forget who God is. God is big. He is much bigger than we are, and what He orders, He pays for. He is not like the guy that orders the most expensive meal on the menu, and then sits down and consumes it, and then fumbles around for his credit card because he cannot find his wallet. That is not God.

Where God guides, God provides. There is a statement you should write down, and you should learn, and you should memorize because you are going to need it. Satan and the demonic realm and your detractors are always going to come to you with, "What about limitations here or limitations there?" Where God guides, God provides. Here Moses is being reminded of who God is. There is no reason to be insecure about your role and your task and who you are, because you are serving the all powerful God. You are serving the "I AM."

#### Names for God in Genesis

1. Elohim (1:1) – Power
2. Yahweh (2:4) – Relational
3. El Roi (Gen. 16:13) – Aware
4. El Olam (21:33) – Eternal
5. Jehovah Jireh (22:14) – Provision
6. God Isaac Feared (31:42, 53) – Reverenced
7. God, the God of Israel (33:20) – National



God has many names in the Bible. They all mean different things. They bring out different aspects of who He is: Elohim, power; Yahweh, relational; El Roi, the God who is aware; El Olam, the God who is eternal. He has always been Jehovah Jireh, the God who provides; the God Isaac feared; the God who deserves reverence; the God of Israel, meaning He is a national God. Yes, He loves all people, but He has a special role for the nation of Israel.

To that list, you can add another great name of God that shows up in the Book of Exodus, where God calls Himself the "I AM." The first time this occurred is in Exodus 3:14, where God calls Moses to speak to Pharaoh. Moses wants to know, "Who shall I say sent me?" Here is the answer:

*"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM' has sent you'" (Exodus 3:14).*

What greater resume do you need than that? What greater credentials are there than that? Keep that in mind as God is calling you to do something specific and you are mentally disqualifying yourself and thinking through all of your limitations. Who are we dealing with here? We are dealing with the "I AM."

Very sadly, many people, my own mother included—although her thinking is now straight on this—are raised in homes where they are told over and over again that Jesus was a good moral philosopher. Jesus was a good moral teacher, but He never claimed to be God. Has anybody heard that? That is a lie right from the pit of hell. It takes hardly any theological prowess to figure this out, because Jesus says this in the New Testament, over and over again claiming to be God. One of the things Jesus said is He called Himself in His incarnate state the "I AM."

Jesus spoke to His detractors, that is His people, that is the Pharisees that wanted Him dead, that were being influenced by Satan, the father of lies:

*"Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am'" (John 8:58).*

Earlier, Jesus made the statement about Abraham and He said, "Abraham saw My day and was glad" (John 8:56). They turned on Him, and they said, "You are out of your mind. Abraham lived 2,000 years ago. You are not yet 50 years old. How in the world could You ever say that?" (John 8:57). "Abraham, a man that lived 2,000 years ago, saw My day and was glad," Jesus said. "The reason I knew Abraham and everything before Abraham is because I am. I am the uncaused cause, the eternally existent, self-existent One."

When He did that, He took a title that belongs to God, and He applied it right to Himself. This idea that Jesus never claimed to be God, it is like, "What Bible are you reading?"

That was a direct claim to deity and they knew exactly what He was saying, his Jewish pharisaical detractors.

*"Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple" (John 8:59).*

They knew exactly what He was saying. In fact, what He was saying was so blasphemous they were going to kill Him right there on the spot. Why were they going to do that? Because they were under the Old Testament law, which says:

*""Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall surely be put to death"" (Leviticus 24:16).*

That is how the Jews executed blasphemers. They stoned them to death. When you go to Israel, you are going to see really quickly why the Jews use this method of capital punishment. There are rocks and stones everywhere. It reminds me of when Jesus was told to rebuke His disciples. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "If they are quiet, the rocks themselves are going to cry out" (Luke 19:40). I am thinking to myself, "That is going to be quite a chorus there, because there are rocks and stones everywhere."

They were going to take Jesus and kill Him right there on the spot. Had it not been for the providential intervention of the Father, He would have died a premature death because He took a title that all the Hebrews understood was exclusive to God, and He applied it right to Himself to the point where they were going to execute Him. Keep that in mind the next time you hear someone say, "Jesus was a good moral philosopher and a good moral teacher, but He never claimed to be God." Jesus is the most unique person that has ever walked this earth because He claimed to be God, and He proved that He was God through His bodily resurrection from the dead. It is one thing to claim to be God. It is another thing to actually pull it off.

The root of all of this is the title that God is using for Himself, as He is dealing with a very insecure Moses. God calls Himself the "I AM," and then He gives Moses his instructions: *"...speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak to you" (Exodus 6:29).* In other words, "I am going to talk to you and you are going to relay it to Pharaoh. I am going to give you truth, and you are going to turn it around and relay it to Pharaoh."

"By the way, Moses, you are not to take the truth that I give you and give 75% to Pharaoh, 25% to Pharaoh, or 50% to Pharaoh. You are to give it all to Pharaoh." That is very important to watch as you study the Bible, watch the words "all" and "every." As you understand the words "all" and "every," you will understand the philosophy of the teaching ministry of Sugar Land Bible Church, which is to preach the Word.

When God said to preach the Word, He did not mean part of it. He meant all of it. Why is that? Because of what Paul would write to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:16:

*"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).*

That flows right into the next chapter, where God says to Timothy through Paul:

*"Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction" (2 Timothy 4:2).*

When he told Timothy to preach the Word, he meant all of it, not sections of it, not parts of it, but all of it. There is a major pastor today within evangelicalism that has said we need to unhitch from the Old Testament. I am thinking to myself, "That is like living in a house saying, 'I like the walls and I like the ceiling and I like the roof, but I do not like the foundation.'" You cannot understand biblical Christianity without the foundation of what we as Protestants call the Old Testament.

When Paul was giving those instructions to Timothy, I do not even think he was talking about the New Testament primarily because the New Testament was just being compiled. There are entire books of the Bible that had not even been written yet, like probably Jude; maybe 1 and 2 Peter; certainly 1, 2, and 3 John; and certainly the Book of Revelation had not been written yet. When Paul says to Timothy, "All Scripture is inspired," and "Preach the word," he was talking about the Old Testament.

Preach all of it. Teach all of it. Do not shirk or shrink in your responsibilities. Why? Because of what Christ said earlier. As Jesus is having this contest with Satan, Jesus starts quoting the Bible and He gives to Satan three quotations from the Book of Deuteronomy. When Satan commanded Jesus to turn these stones to bread—because Jesus had been fasting and was very hungry—Satan, trying to drive a wedge in the Trinity between the Father and the Son, said, "Go outside the will of the Father. Do Your own thing. Use Your abilities to work miracles Your own way, and take the stones that are out there and speak the word to them, and they will be bread and You can eat."

That would have been outside the will of the Father, because it was the will of the Father at this particular point that Jesus would be fasting. How does Jesus respond to that? He quotes the Book of Deuteronomy. Most Christians, you realize, have never even read the Book of Deuteronomy. Yet Jesus felt the Book of Deuteronomy was sufficient to ward off the worst temptations aimed at Him by Satan.

*"But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God"'" (Matthew 4:4).*

How is the spiritual man or woman within you sustained? Not through some words from the Bible, but every word. That is taken from Deuteronomy 8:3, which says:

*"He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 8:3).*

Therefore it is the duty of the Christian to understand the entire Bible. It is the duty of the pulpit ministry to teach the entire Bible. We see this "all" and "every" picked up in the writings of Jeremiah the prophet:

*"But the Lord said to me,  
'Do not say, "I am a youth,"  
Because everywhere I send you, you shall go,  
And all that I command you, you shall speak"' (Jeremiah 1:7).*

"You are going to receive, and you are going to speak. Your job, Jeremiah, is to speak everything." We might call this the full council of God's Word.

Paul the Apostle in Acts 20:26-27 said this to the church leadership at Ephesus:

*"Therefore, I testify to you to this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God" (Acts 20:26-27).*

The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. That is what our church here is about. Quite frankly, it is what every church should be about, but very sadly, what is running Christianity today is not those passages that I just mentioned, but it is this. You may have seen this. It is very common in business management, business marketing. It is called Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and it is a structure that helps people develop a marketing mix that can appeal to the needs of people so that those people will in turn buy their product.

Maslow articulated it this way: first man has physiological needs, and once he gets those met—like hunger and thirst—then he tries to get his safety and security needs met. Once those are met, then he tries to get his social needs met, his sense of longing, sense of love, etc.. Then once those are met, he tries to get his esteem needs met. Man wants to understand that he is significant. Man wants to understand that he matters. Then comes the esteem needs, recognition and status.

Once all of those levels of need are met, then you get to the highest point where people are, as Maslow said, self-actualized. If you become sensitive to this, you will see that it runs marketing and campaigns and commercials around the clock, because all of the commercials that you see are appealing to these different levels of need. "You better get that new security system and cameras set up in your house," which is an appeal to safety needs. "I hope you are not driving around in the car you were in last year, because people are not going to think you are important." That is an appeal to esteem needs.

I am not here to necessarily condemn this by way of marketing. It works, but what started to happen in the 1980s—and it really started with a man named Norman Vincent Peale. Have you heard of him? The late Walter Martin was asked about Norman Vincent Peale, and Martin said, "Paul is appealing that Peale's theology is appalling," which was a nice summation.

It was Norman Vincent Peale who started to say, "You know what? We cannot teach in the church the whole counsel of God's Word, because people will not come. Who is going to sit through a genealogy in Exodus 6? What need does that appeal to? What we are going to do is we are going to rummage through the Bible, and we are going to pick texts that happen to fit within this triangle or these different layers."

That philosophy was picked up by somebody in Garden Grove, California, whose church I grew up essentially next to. I used to drive by it all the time on the freeway—a man named Robert Schuller, who built this giant church of glass called the Crystal Cathedral. He started to promote this.

When I was younger—and this is funny because I have a terrible sense of direction—I was a courier for a law firm. It was my job to get people to places on time, which was a total joke. You want to talk about being unqualified? That was me. I had the privilege of driving around in the limo. I had my hat on and everything, and the law partner's mother was in the back seat, and she started going on and on about the Crystal Cathedral. "What a great place it is. You go to that place and that guy just fills you with so much hope and optimism."

I am thinking to myself, "Wait a minute. She is Jewish." Not that a Jewish person cannot come to the Lord, but I had some questions, and so I finally got the courage to ask her. I said, "Do they mention Jesus in that church?" Her answer to me was chilling. She says, "Well, not per se. But what a place—the emotion and the feelings and the optimism and the positive." I said, "Do they mention sin?" She says, "Not per se." "Do they mention Satan?" "Not per se." "Do they mention blood?" "Not per se."

What I was discovering was that ministers—Robert Schuller, who I think understood the gospel, at least intellectually, a very devout, reformed type of theologian—started to promote this idea that you take the Bible very selectively, and you use it to preach around people's needs, as revealed in Maslow's hierarchy. That will grow the church. Guess what? It grew the church. The place was packed week after week after week.

That philosophy then gets handed off to a guy named Rick Warren, who does the exact same thing in Orange County, Saddleback, California. That philosophy got exported to a guy named Bill Hybels, who did the same thing in Chicago at Willow Creek. What started with Peale went to Schuller, went to Warren, went to Hybels, and now it has gone everywhere.

It is right here in Houston through the preaching and teaching of Joel Osteen. Joel Osteen, when you look at him, is a younger version of Norman Vincent Peale. He is doing exactly what Norman Vincent Peale was promoting way back in the day. It is this sort of approach to the Bible that is very topical, very piecemeal. It is not that a lot of the things they say are wrong. It is just what got left out.

You ask Christians that go to these types of churches, "When was the last sermon you heard on the End Times?" They do not know anything about the End Times. Why would you avoid the End Times? Because it does not fit into Maslow's hierarchy. "When was the last sermon you heard on the doctrine of creation?" They do not know anything about that because it does not fit Maslow's hierarchy. "When was the last sermon you heard about spiritual warfare?" They do not know anything about that because it does not fit into Maslow's hierarchy.

My point is that we have gotten away from making disciples into trying to build these giant churches. That is not the calling of the church. First of all, the calling of a pastor is not to build a church, because Jesus was very clear in Matthew 16:18:

*"...I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it"*  
(Matthew 16:18).

It is His church. It is His building project. He is the one that determines who sits where and who comes and who is interested in coming. I do not have any control over that, but Jesus does. I am not to get into the church building business. I am to be in the declaring the full council of God's Word purpose. I am interested in teaching the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. I know we are only in the Book of Exodus, but we do have a Wednesday night service and we do have a Sunday School and that is my interest. I have no interest in slicing, dicing, chopping, removing, not emphasizing things that do not happen to fit within Maslow's hierarchy.

What we are interested in here is declaring the full purpose or the full council of God's Word. One of the reasons we think the way that we do is because the Bible keeps saying "all" and "every." I do not feel that I am in a position to edit God. If God said it, it is important and it needs to be declared.

We have another pastor in this area, who just came out with a video saying that if a pastor preaches for 30 minutes it is way too long. He is one of these pastors that has multiple campuses. He said, "I was on this campus and my sermon went 30 minutes," and he was almost apologizing on Instagram about this. He says, "I went to my other campus and you know what? I got it all done in 20 minutes. You guys that are preachers out there, you really need to aim for 20 minutes."

What have you got at the end of the day with that? You have a church that maybe is a mile wide, but it is about a millimeter deep. You are not preparing your flock for what is coming. You are not preparing them for persecution. You are not preparing them for overcoming the desires of the flesh. You are not preparing them for the Bema Seat

judgment of Christ. If you are going to just do a 20-minute sermon, then you are going to get 20 minutes of Christianity during the week.

What did your athletic coach used to tell you? Our high school coach told us this all the time with weights and training. He says, "You are going to get more out of it the more you put into it." If you are going to go through the motions, then do not expect a lot of development athletically, but if you start putting something into it, he said that is like a bank account. The more money you put into it, the greater the yield in terms of interest.

We understand that in the natural world, but this is how it works in the spiritual world. Salvation is free, do not get me wrong, but if you want to walk with God and you want to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, then it is going to require something from you—denial, deprivation, all under God's power; filling your lives with things that are actually eternal and are going to stand the test of time; showing up consistently and regularly at church; developing a healthy prayer life; developing a healthy scriptural meditation lifestyle.

These are not things that are going to happen in a vacuum. You have to start taking steps towards those things. That is what the walk of discipleship is about. That is what pastoral ministry is about. It is designed to encourage you in that direction, rather than use the Bible in a very limited, piecemeal fashion to see how many people we can get in the door.

We have timing, and we have a command (Exodus 6:29). Then here come Moses' excuses—Number one, lack of eloquence; number two, Pharaoh will not listen.

*"But Moses said before the Lord, 'Behold, I am unskilled in speech; how then will Pharaoh listen to me?'" (Exodus 6:30).*

To quote that great theologian Yogi Berra, "It's déjà vu all over again," because that is what Moses said earlier. This is a real problem with Moses. "I do not have the gift of gab. I do not have the oratorical pizzazz." The first time Moses brought this up was back in Exodus 4:10-11.

By the way, do you know the number one fear next to death is public speaking? If you are scared out of your mind to do public speaking, can I let you in on a secret? That is what God wants you to do, because God will always push you in the direction of your weakness. I have told you my story. I was scared to death of public speaking. I took this speech class because I said to myself, "I have to get over this." I got up in front of the class and I spoke for and the professor marked on the paper and read how long I talked. I think it was like seven minutes and 51 seconds.

I sat down with sweat pouring off my head and out of my armpits and everywhere else you can imagine. He gave my paper back, and it said in red that I had been up there for seven minutes and 51 seconds, and I was just stunned that I had been up in front of the class that long. Today, you guys pray for the day that I would go back to seven minutes

and 51 seconds. It is one of those things where I just did not want to do it; I hated to do it. Yet the Lord kept pushing me in that direction.

That is how it is going to work in your life. If there is something that you absolutely do not want to do, chances are that is what you are supposed to do. This is how God is dealing with Moses, who has this hang up about oratory.

*"Then Moses said to the Lord, 'Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' Then the Lord said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?'" (Exodus 4:10-11).*

"Lord, I just cannot use my mouth to glorify You." God comes back and says, "I am the I AM. I am the self-existent One. I am the one that gave you the mouth. You would not even have the mouth if I did not give it to you." Understanding God's sovereignty and who He is is how we start working through our fears of doing different things and our insecurities.

Jeremiah had the same problem about 800 years later when God called him to be a prophet. Remember what Jeremiah said?

*"Then I said, 'Alas, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, Because I am a youth.' But the Lord said to me, 'Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak'" (Jeremiah 1:6-7).*

Maybe God is trying to tell us to cut back on our worship services, I do not know, but God uses us at the point of our greatest insecurity. He uses us at the point of our greatest weakness.

*"For your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of this world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of this world to shame the things which are strong" (1 Corinthians 1:26-27).*

"Lord, I am not wise. I am not mighty. I am not noble. People look at me as if I am foolish and weak." God says, "You are the person I want to use because you are a pliable instrument in My hands."

*"The Lord looked at him [Gideon] and said, 'Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?' He said to Him, 'O Lord,*

*how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house"* (Judges 6:14-15).

"Hey, Gideon, go deliver Israel. I am with you. I am the I AM. I am the One who gave you your mouth." "Who am I? I am from Manasseh. Manasseh is not the biggest of the big. My tribe is very small. My family within that small tribe is very small, as well." Do you see what God is doing here? He is not calling qualified people. He is qualifying the called.

Paul the Apostle in 2 Corinthians 12:9, complaining about his thorn in the flesh, says:

*"And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness'"* (2 Corinthians 12:9).

That is why we entitled this message "Power in Weakness." If you feel weak, or if you feel insecure—we all do at different levels—you are the perfect person for God to use because God knows if He picks you, you are going to do things His way rather than your own way.

The problem with being prideful and full of yourself is that we have a tendency to get in the way of God. Many times God will circumvent people that we think are better gifted, better qualified to do such and such. He will choose a very weak instrument. You see this theme with the church at Philadelphia in Revelation 3:7-8:

*"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts, and no one opens, says this: 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut'"* (Revelation 3:7-8).

Why did Philadelphia get this open door and Ephesus did not, and Smyrna did not, and Pergamum did not, and Thyatira did not, and Sardis did not, and Laodicea did not? Philadelphia got it. The answer is right there in Revelation 3:8:

*"Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name'"* (Revelation 3:8).

"I am not looking for the biggest. I am not looking for the strongest. I am looking for the weakest, because My power is perfected in weakness." This is what Moses is learning.

The last excuse that Moses has is, "No one is going to listen." It is at the very end of Exodus 6:30, which we will conclude with here:

*"...how then will Pharaoh listen to me?"* (Exodus 6:30).

This is something that has been bothering Moses for a long time, since Exodus 6:9, at least.

*"So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage" (Exodus 6:9).*

It is been bothering Moses since Exodus 6:12:

*"But Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, 'Behold, the sons of Israel have not listened to me; how then will Pharaoh listen to me, for I am unskilled in speech?'" (Exodus 6:12).*

Moses is very worried about what people are going to think about him, how they are going to respond to him. The truth of the matter is, how people respond to what God has told you to tell them is actually none of our business. We are not responsible for the reactions of people. That is God's business. Our business is to declare everything that God has given us. How people react to it—like it, do not like it, thumbs up, thumbs down—you have no control over whatsoever.

I do not know how it is that we got into our thinking this idea that somehow we are responsible for the reactions of people. What we are responsible for is the declaration of truth. How they respond to it, if they respond to it positively or negatively, is between them and the Lord. You have no control over that whatsoever. This is in the calling of Isaiah 6:8-10:

*"Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and whom shall go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here I am. Send me!' He said, 'Go, and tell this people:  
'Keep on listening, but do not perceive;  
Keep on looking, but do not understand.'  
'Render the hearts of this people insensitive,  
Their ears dull,  
And their eyes dim,  
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,  
Hear with their ears,  
Understand with their hearts,  
And return and be healed'" (Isaiah 6:8-10).*

The Trinity is having a conversation. "Who is going to go for Us and speak for Us to the rebellious house of Israel?" Isaiah says, "Sign me up, Lord, I will do it." I wish the chapter ended there, but it does not. Isaiah is called into the ministry. His mouth is touched. He is going to be given the very oracles of God, the Word of God. Yet he is told on the front end, "No one is going to care. No one is going to listen."

This is not some low level guy. This is Isaiah, our top writing prophet. He was called into the ministry and gifted by God. He was told on the front end, "No one is going to care

and no one is going to listen. They are not going to perceive, they are not going to understand. They are going to keep being dull. They are going to keep being dim, and they are going to lack spiritual sensitivity. But you are called into the ministry, Isaiah." You see the pattern here. The greatest writing prophet we have was told, "You are not responsible for the reactions of people. That is between God and them. You are responsible for the declaration of the full council of God's Word."

Look at Noah. How long did Noah preach? Genesis 6:3 says 120 years. He even had a big pulpit out there on his driveway called the ark that he was building. He was getting attention. He did this for 120 years. Second Peter 2:5 says that he was a preacher of righteousness. The world at that time, according to Henry Morris—the scientist running the numbers—could have been as high as seven billion people. Here is a guy ministering in front of seven billion people for 120 years. Exactly how many converts does he have to show for it? Eight. One of them was his wife, three of them were his sons, and the other three were married to his sons.

After 120 years of proclamation, you do not have a single convert outside of your immediate family. That is the story of Noah. God did not hold Noah accountable for the results. He held him accountable for the proclamation of the message. Once the message is delivered, the preacher is exonerated, because now the onus is on the people to decide what they are going to do with the message that the preacher has no control over.

Ezekiel is called into the ministry twice—the first time to preach judgment that is coming upon Judah (Ezekiel 3), and the second time, now that Judah has fallen, he is called into the ministry to preach restoration (Ezekiel 33). There are two calling sections in the Book of Ezekiel, one in Ezekiel 3 and one in Ezekiel 33. What does God tell Ezekiel both times?

*"Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me. When I say to the wicked, 'You will not surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself" (Ezekiel 3:17-19).*

Jot down Ezekiel 33:7-9, the second calling section. It says the exact same thing. In other words, "Ezekiel, here is how it is going to work. I am going to give you truth. Your truth is to disseminate it to the people I want you to disseminate it to. If you do not disseminate it and you hold back part of the truth, if you get into a topical sermon series to grow the church, for example, and you start shrinking back from truths that I want you to declare, if that person dies in their sin and you have not told them the truth," God says to Ezekiel, "Then I am coming after you because you are the watchman on the

wall. But if you tell them everything I have told you to tell them, and the people do not listen, then you are off the hook. You have delivered yourself."

This is why Paul, speaking to the Ephesian elders, said, *"Therefore, I testify to you to this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men"* (Acts 20:26). That language goes right back to Ezekiel, and he is paraphrasing Ezekiel 3:17-19 and Ezekiel 33:7-9. Both calling sections say the same thing. Paul says, "You know what? I am off the hook, guys, because I gave you everything that God told me to give. I am not responsible for your response. I am not responsible for your reaction. Now it is between you and God." That is a very important lesson to understand when God calls us.

Moses, with his complaints about, "They will not listen to me," do you know what God is saying? "So what? That is not your job. That is not your responsibility. Your responsibility is to represent truth to them accurately, comprehensively, and completely. How they respond is out of your control. That is between Me and them." God says, "What is under your control is obedience. By the fact that you are obedient, you deliver yourself. You do not necessarily deliver them. If they are going to be delivered or not depends on the response, which you cannot control. Here is what you have delivered though, yourself."

That becomes, I think, a much more biblical way of doing pulpit ministry than the perpetual topical approach. The truth of the matter is:

*"Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment" (James 3:1).*

The moment you step up as a teacher is the moment your accountability went way through the roof, and you are responsible for the declaration of everything. May the Lord help us to be faithful in that calling.

By the way, what is God going to say at the Bema Seat judgment of rewards? Remember the parable of the talents? It says, *"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave'"* (Matthew 25:21), and *"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave'"* (Matthew 25:23). Notice that he does not say to him, "Well done, good and successful servant," or "Well done, good and fruitful servant." It is, "Well done, good and faithful servant." If there is success in human terms or not, that is something that is out of the control of the preacher.

First Corinthians 4:2, speaking now specifically of the Bema Seat judgment, says this:

*"In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one can be found trustworthy" (1 Corinthians 4:2).*

What is a steward? A steward is not an owner, but a manager. A steward manages something on behalf of somebody else. That is what you have; that is what I have. God has given every person in this room, at differing degrees, the three T's—time, talent,

and treasure. The day will come where God will ask you, "What you did with those things?" You will not be held accountable for success, but you will be held accountable for faithfulness and trustworthiness.

This is the lesson that Moses is learning. Do not worry, there are going to be some good responses in this book, but God is very clear to Moses on the front end. "That is outside of your jurisdiction. That is outside of your domain. Just be faithful in what I have called you to do." May the Lord help us do that this week.