

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Exodus 4:18-31

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades

March 13, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

What do you want most in life?

I want to be healed, Find true love, I want to get rich.

Most in life? To be the men and women God meant us to be – live life pleasing to God, inspire those around us to know, love and serve God ... pass on a legacy of faith ... make a lasting spiritual impact.

TODAY we will be reminded ... Leadership begins in private, with those who live with us ... family.

Matthew 16:26 (NIV84) ²⁶ *What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?* ... or the souls of your children.

Nothing I want more than for Susie, our family and church family to know God and walk with Him. Do everything I can to encourage them in the faith. To inspire them, to lead them toward God.

Please open your Bibles to Exodus 4. Page 42.

You are familiar with the story ... People in bondage. God hears cries, sends deliverer.

Moses was God's chosen deliverer, answer to prayers ... before God would use him, had to prepare Him. MOSES Miracle birth, salvation, education; murder, flees (40 yrs backside desert). God appears bush.

Despite excuses, Moses accepts call to deliver; bag of tricks, returns to Midian to pack up and leave.

Read vv. 18-23. God is Patient ... answers excuses. Gives reassurance. Preview of coming attractions. Then all of a sudden, Dramatic shift in the story. **Read vv. 24-26**

God strikes Moses with a life-threatening illness. God is ready to kill him. **Lord met Moses, about to kill.** Why? **Unfinished business. One final act of preparation.**

God had brought him a long way. Apparent Moses was not ready to lead until sin was dealt with.

He failed to do what God had commanded, Had not circumcised son on the 8th day as God commanded.

Not a bad dad, passive dad. Provider, played ... He had neglected spiritual health of his family.

Ill. Possible, like many parents today, ABSENT ... tending sheep, saving the world, family needed leader.

Ill. He hadn't made church a priority, they skipped AWANA, they never prayed together, never shared what God was teaching him, (maybe he had given up on God, spiritual life private).

Before he could lead the nation, the people of God, the sin had to be addressed.

What's the big deal about Circumcision? (instructional video, decided against it)... not appropriate topic for Sunday morning or for a crowd of mixed gender. Definitely not a story any child should hear. Envisioning the scene strikes horror in our hearts.

- God sends Moses down to Egypt to free Israel
- He's on his way with his wife and kids when God tries to kill him
- Zipporah knows what she has to do, pulls out a sharp rock (flint knife) and circumcises their son
- Then she puts the foreskin on Moses' feet (euphemism). Standing over Moses, blood on her hands she declares: "You are a bridegroom of blood to me" ... Bride of Frankenstein
- At which point God leaves Moses alone.

Why was God so focused on such a minute detail when He had apparently forgiven the murder? What's the BIG deal? Moses had disobeyed. **Gen 17:10-14.** Broken the covenant.

Moses had been negligent with regard to circumcision; that negligence endangered his life and mission. **Spiritual leadership begins in private, at home. Deut. 6** ... (Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters). While some believe private life of public leaders has no bearing on a leader's ability to lead. Not God. You are your child's primary spiritual influencer. Shepherd heart, create thirst. Teach and lead. Titan of industry, leader of men and women ... if not leading at home, you missed the point. Not the parent, the man or woman God meant you to be.

What role did Zipporah play in this?

Moses & Zip had 2 sons. 1st Gershom (alien) apparently been circumcised; 2nd Eleizer (hope) had not ... Speculating ... but judging from her reactions, reasonable to assume this had been a huge point of contention in their marriage.

Ill. Most of our biggest arguments were over decisions related to our kids. Together on one thing! Zipporah's family worshipped the same God ... different denomination. She was uncomfortable with these unorthodox practices. It traumatized her.

So they made a deal, **To make peace, Moses had backed off** ... he didn't push it.

Wedge in Moses relationship with God. *"I wonder when He is going to bring this up?"*

Big wedge in their relationship, still an open wound long after Gershom's body healed.

Now she was the one doing the dirty work. Moses was totally incapacitated. She knew what God was doing. She did what she knew she had to do to save her husband's life.

God had unfinished business with Moses, unfinished business with Zipporah (Sephora). Serious business.

Spiritual leadership begins in private, at home

Husbands and wives must work together to lead children spiritually.

Essential to be on the same page ... education, friends, sports, activities.

Not enough just get them saved, create a thirst for spiritual growth. Passionate daily connection.

Two parents agreeing together, working together determined to make spiritual life the greatest priority.

Ephesians 6:4 (NIV84) *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Are you leading in private at home, working together? If not God has unfinished business ...

What does it take to become spiritual leaders at home?

1st Commit to make spiritual growth and pursuit of God priority #1.

Won't be #1 in their life, unless God is #1 in your life. What are you most committed to?

GRID ... exercise. **Academics, Sports, Friends, Recreation, Success** ... no other God's.

Agree together that you are going to do everything you can to lead your children to faith in God.

Reorder priorities. Get them to AWANA, make Youth Group essential, Sunday mornings a priority. Camp.

AMY ... Shawn ... elevate over every other pursuit. #1 priority, instead of optional.

Exasperates children when spiritual growth is in top 5 but not #1. Just enough Jesus to inoculate against

2nd Practice what you preach ... authenticity. Be genuine, not fake. Real, not a player.

Hypocrisy. Ill. I felt he was a hypocrite. Dad could talk about peace and love out loud to the world, but he could never show it to the people who supposedly meant the most to him: his wife and son. How can you talk about peace and love and have a family in bits and pieces-no communication, adultery, divorce? You can't do it, not if you're being true and honest with yourself." *Julian Lennon (35), who was abandoned by his father, Beatle John Lennon, at the age of five*

Horror stories about kids who grew up in religious homes. Social worker in Hollywood that works with homeless teens confided in me that almost every one of them came from a strictly religious home.

Nowhere is AUTHENTICITY more important than in the home. Where children watch parents, students of parents, observing them closely ... when you live with someone you can't fool them. They know.

Our faith needs to be so real, that they want what we have. Not pushed/forced, but authentic/alive.

Exasperates children when we are hypocritical. They see us. Study us.

3rd Grow individually, Work as a TEAM ... personal devotion. Grow spiritually ... not perfect.

2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

3rd Grow individually, Work as a TEAM

i.e. Oxygen. Have to make it yours. Take care of your own soul. Cannot pass on what you do not possess.

ill. I watched. #1. Mom and dad were a team. Dad in the morning, mom at night. Constantly engaged in spiritual conversations. Growing spiritually.

Conclusion:

Travis and Shawn ... wrote a song. ***"The Man I'm Meant to Be"*** Men and women who walk with God, spiritual impact, passing on a legacy. Most important thing in life?

You may be a leader at work, a titan of industry ... successful and wealthy, but if you fail to leave a legacy of faith, you have failed to do what is most important. Spiritual impact.

Will you commit, will you practice, will you grow individually and work as a team?

What is God calling you to do to be a spiritual leader at home?