

Getting God

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Have you ever considered doing something you felt totally unqualified for? Interviewed for a new job over your head, decided to become a parent? Then you get the job, have the baby, and suddenly you're overwhelmed with the calling. Moses attempts something he doesn't feel qualified for, questioned it all the way up to now. How does he get over the hump? Let's take a look at: Getting Qualified, Getting Harder, Getting God.

Getting Qualified

Moses says, Israel won't listen to me, Pharaoh didn't listen to me, and besides, I can't even speak. I'm *inadequate* for the calling. And then, it cuts to a commercial for ancestry.com, a 12 verse, 56 person, genealogy. Why? Suspense. Will Moses follow through? How will God respond? And for the Israelite reading the story, Are Moses and Aaron even qualified? The genealogy is here to answer those questions. First, we discover Moses is traced back to Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob, whose name is also *Israel*. So Moses' lineage is traced all the way back to the Israel, the *man* and the *nation*. He and Aaron are in the direct line of God's firstborn son. Second, in verse 16 the genealogy breaks from the sons of Jacob to focus on one son, Levi. Why? Levites were the priestly class. Aaron will serve as the high priest and Moses will oversee the tabernacle. What is the genealogy establishing? Pedigree, qualification. It establishes unequivocal pedigree and credibility for the newly minted leaders. Which is why 6:26, [These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said: "Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts."](#) They're legit. But right after that Moses doubts, "Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips," unqualified to speak. How will Pharaoh listen to me? *He's still catching up to his pedigree*. In a sense, that's anyone who puts their faith in Jesus, because when you do you gain his righteousness *status* (but choose something unrighteous), adopted into his family (but don't act like it), receive Spirit (walk in the flesh). Talk about pedigree, we're in the line of Jesus Christ *and we falter*. *We're all catching up to our spiritual lineage*. So how does Moses close the distance? The credibility gap. First, God ups the call, ["See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother will be your prophet.](#) Like God? To Pharaoh? Are you kidding? What does it mean? This is the second time the Lord said this to Moses. The first time he said he would make him like God *to Aaron* (4:14). How so? By receiving divine revelation straight from God and passing it onto Aaron. In a similar way, Moses will represent God's authority to Pharaoh. So before we uncover how Moses confronts his doubt, *we discover his calling is even higher than it appears*. Then verse 6, [Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them](#) (7:6). They did it. They finally obeyed, just as they were told. So, how do you close the gap between your pedigree and call? How did he confront the doubt? Two ways: 1) by recognizing the seriousness of his call—you will be God to pharaoh. 2) by doing just as the Lord commanded. Moses believed and obeyed his way into true credibility. So do we. Do you recognize the seriousness of your call? There's a place in the Gospel of Matthew where someone comes to Jesus and says, I will follow you, just let me bury my father. And do you know what Jesus says, leave the dead to bury the dead." Seems harsh. What's he saying. If you're going to follow me, you've got to give up everything, even attachment to family members. Some of them are dead, but I'm calling you into a ministry of *life*. If you want to follow me, you've got to die to what your mother thinks, what your sister wants, what

your dad says. I'm your Dad; I'm your master. And I'm calling you into life. Faith is enrolling in the ministry of Christ, and never unenrolling. It's saying I'm a student, a servant, for life! How do we close the gap on our calling? By recognizing the true nature of *our call and getting on with it*. Doing it. Obeying Christ. So, let me ask you this morning: Do you believe the gospel: that you are no longer a slave to sin but a servant of Christ? Then obey your way into it. Step out in obedient faith. How? Remember your pedigree. You have status no job can give you; love no family member can show you; power you can't find anywhere else. What for? *To show God to the world!* Join our prayer team, serve our children, share the gospel, make the sacrifice. *Do just as the Lord commanded!*

Getting Harder

Now, just because we're doing what God commands, doesn't mean things will get easier. For Moses and Aaron *it got harder!* But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you (7:3-4). This is a tough pill to swallow in culture of comfort. We streamline everything. Automated billing, self-flushing, A/C in cars and elevators. I just got a remote I don't even have to touch; I just talk to it! *Efficiency and ease crowd out sacrifice and service.* But good things are often hard things. Having a baby, getting a promotion, developing deep relationships. God is doing a *great* thing, and to do that he hardens Pharaoh's heart. Now this word harden is different than the one we saw earlier, where God *strengthens* Pharaoh's heart (4:21). Here God takes a more active role to harden Pharaoh's heart. Which raises a couple questions. Is that *fair* and *why* would he do it? **Fair.** Several thoughts. *First*, let's remember God is hardening an already hard heart. Pharaoh is a megalomaniacal despot who tortures and enslaves people for a show of power. *Second*, the same word is used of Pharaoh stubbornly hardening his own heart (13:15). So he's not innocent or passive. *Third*, God is doing what only God can do. The only thing Pharaoh can harden is his own heart. Despite all his power, he cannot change hearts. God, on the other hand, can harden and soften any heart, do signs and wonders, part seas and close them. So it's not only fair; it's true. *God is being true to himself.* Isn't that something we value today? Why not apply the same principle to God? After all he has a pure and perfect heart. You do you God. He must or he would be inauthentic. God would acting less than God. So, it's not only fair; it's essential for God to exercise his power over his creation. Brings us the next question. **Why?** He states clearly in verse 3, and later in 11:9, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." God hardens his heart so he can multiply signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. So why does God want to multiply signs and wonders? Verse 5: The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt" He does them so *the Egyptians will know he is the Lord, YHWH.* This knowledge is both objectively reverent and subjectively redemptive. God hardens his heart so the Egyptians will know that YHWH, not Pharaoh, is King of kings and Lord of lords. They see his power over the created order *and their king* and revere him. But the knowledge isn't just reverent. You be you God. It's also subjectively redemptive: they will know the Lord as the one who brings out the people of Israel from among them. Know him as a redeemer of slaves, contender of the oppressed. *Egypt* will know YHWH reverently *and* redemptively. How? by faith. We're told a mixed multitude goes up from Egypt. Egyptians believed. The objective reality about God's power and greatness became subjective, experienced, reverential redemption. Similarly, at 25 I thought Robie Dodson would make a great mother. Objectively, I thought she's got the biology, the

chemistry, the aptitude. But it wasn't until she became a mother, subjectively, that I really really knew it. She transformed: caring, patient, attentive. Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart? So Egypt could objectively know, God is king, reverent, and subjectively experience, God is Savior, redemptive. If he didn't, Egypt would not have known, through signs and wonders, YHWH is king and YHWH is kind. And it's true for us. God calls us objectively, but its only when we obey that we close the gap on the credibility, that we experience Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Getting God

Back to the story, Moses and Aaron obey God and go to Pharaoh who says prove yourself by doing a miracle. So Aaron throws down his staff and it morphs into a snake. Pretty impressive, right? A stick of wood turns into a slithering reptile. But then Pharaoh's magicians mimic the miracle. This is what missiologists call a power encounter. When I was in the hills of Myanmar I met a shaman who was tattooed from head to toe, and each tat was accompanied by an incantation. When I told him about Christ, he said, Oh, Christianity has power and wanted some. But in a power encounter God demonstrates his superior power. You don't just add it to your sources/list. So God does God, and bam, Aaron's rod swallows all the other rods. They can't mimic that. They've been defeated. Now, how is this a power encounter? In Egypt the serpent was considered a wise and magical creature worn on Pharaoh's crown. So, when Aaron's snake swallowed their snakes, it was effectively saying my God is bigger than your god. And the next time the word swallow is used, is when the Red Sea swallows Pharaoh and all his armies. don't you see. God is great. YHWH is king. Stand in awe, reverence. Act like he's Savior, redemption. Close the gap between your pedigree and your calling by seeking God in all of life. He is worthy.