

The Smallest Link

Series: Sustainable Faith: Together

Exodus 2-3; John 12 (1014)

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May 9, 2010 (Mother's Day)

I. The impact of ordinary people

a. Staying faithful when you don't see immediate results

Exodus 3:7-8 ⁷The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁸So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey..."

Hebrews 11:39-40 TM *Not one of these people, even though their lives of faith were exemplary, got their hands on what was promised. God had a better plan for us: that their faith and our faith would come together to make one completed whole, their lives of faith not complete apart from ours.*

b. The tendency to get ahead of God

Exodus 2:11-15 ¹¹One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. ¹²Glancing this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?" ¹⁴The man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "What I did must have become known." ¹⁵When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian...

c. Being willing to be part of the solution when God acts

Exodus 3:10-11 ¹⁰So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." ¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" ¹²And God said, "I will be with you. ..."

II. When parting the Red Sea isn't your calling in life

a. Never limit God just because circumstances seem insignificant

Zechariah 4:10 NLT ¹⁰*Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin*

Eugene Peterson (speaking of Zechariah & Haggai) *Their preaching pulled the people out of self-preoccupation and got them working together as the people of God... Their self-identity as the people of God was in ruins. For a century they had been knocked around by the world powers, kicked and mocked, used and abused. This once-proud people ... had been treated with contempt for so long that they were in danger of losing all connection with the past, losing their magnificent identify as God's people. ... Zechariah was a major factor in recovering the magnificence from the ruins of a degrading exile. ... [and even today his] messages are continuing to release insight and hope and clarity for the people whom God is using to work out his purposes in a world that has no language for God and the purposes of God.*

b. Regardless of the challenge, the answer is always the same

Acts 4:13 ¹³*When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.*

c. God prepares, we simply provide willing availability

John 12:20-23 ²⁰*Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."* ²²*Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. ²³Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.*