

What's Next: Overcoming Fear, Unbelief, and Discouragement

Whether life hits or it gifts, we need to know what comes next! Life is less about the circumstances themselves and more about how we respond to them.

Opening Questions

- What were your expectations for your life up to this point? What expectations were met? What fell short? What were exceeded?
- How do you feel looking at these areas of your life? (Grateful, disappointed, excited, discouraged, anxious, peaceful, etc.)

Bible Study

Take Responsibility

As they left Pharaoh's court, they confronted Moses and Aaron, who were waiting outside for them. The foremen said to them, "May the Lord judge and punish you for making us stink before Pharaoh and his officials. You have put a sword into their hands, an excuse to kill us!"

Exodus 5:20-21 NLT

- The Israelites blamed Moses and Aaron for what they were going through. They didn't take any responsibility because they were focused on people rather than on God
- We lack responsibility when we live by the opinions of others without going to God. However, this lack of taking responsibility is not a lack of response. We are actually responding to God by abandoning His call for us in our lives! This is not responsible.
- Responsibility is your **ability** to **respond!** Literally your "response" "ability."
- How do you respond to the unexpected? How do you respond to mistakes? What disappointments do you see in life? How have you responded to it? How do you respond to disappointing others?

Then Moses went back to the Lord and protested, “Why have you brought all this trouble on your own people, Lord? Why did you send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh as your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to your people. And you have done nothing to rescue them!”

Exodus 5:22-23 NLT

- Moses teaches us that responding with vulnerability is true responsibility!
- Moses, in this moment, faced a lot of disappointment and failure. He responded to it all, not with words spoken to people, but with vulnerability and honesty expressed to God!
- How is your vulnerability with God? What areas do you need to be vulnerable? What feelings toward God do you need to be vulnerable about?
- Neither mistakes nor the opinions of others mean anything. The fact is, God has chosen you! We will not have the clarity to see or do what’s next in our lives without first clearing space in our hearts by being vulnerable and honest with God

Believe God’s Promises

And God said to Moses, “I am Yahweh—‘the Lord.’ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El-Shaddai—‘God Almighty’—but I did not reveal my name, Yahweh, to them. And I reaffirmed my covenant with them. Under its terms, I promised to give them the land of Canaan, where they were living as foreigners. You can be sure that I have heard the groans of the people of Israel, who are now slaves to the Egyptians. And I am well aware of my covenant with them.

Exodus 6:2-5 NLT

- Once we are vulnerable and honest with God, we are able to see what he has to say about us and our future. Even though he promises amazing things for our lives, it can be easy to still be focused on people’s opinions and thoughts of how our lives will pan out.
- When Pharaoh questioned God’s authority, God spoke up because he wanted Moses and everyone to know: God is the Lord! Not Pharaoh or any other person. Those peoples’ thoughts and opinions do not matter; only God’s does!
- What are God’s thoughts and opinions about you and your life right now? How often do you consider God’s thoughts and opinions of you? Or of your circumstances?
- Do you believe in God’s promises? Why or why not? How can you repent in your unbelief this week?

Take Decisive Action

So Moses told the people of Israel what the Lord had said, but they refused to listen anymore. They had become too discouraged by the brutality of their slavery.

Exodus 6:9 NLT

- The people of Israel teach us that when we don't respond to and deal with discouragement, we become unbelieving and doubtful. They were terrified of becoming disappointed again, and so responded by refusing to listen to God. They settled for a life of mediocrity and stagnation rather than one of faith and vision.
- Are you willing to take leaps of faith even when you've been disappointed? What areas of fear do you have in life? (family, roommates, friendships, leadership, dating, etc.)

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go back to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and tell him to let the people of Israel leave his country."

Exodus 6:10-11 NLT

- Moses had his greatest fear become reality. He feared the people rejecting and refusing to listen to him, and that is exactly what happened.
- But rather than becoming discouraged and giving up like the people of Israel initially did, Moses decided to turn to God with his disappointment instead.
- God's response to Moses was not to get down on him for messing up or making mistakes, but rather he kept calling him forward for what was next.
- God is loyal even when we are taken out by discouragement, and keeps pushing us toward the greater purpose he has planned for our lives!
- If you continue reading Exodus, you will see that this persistence to keep moving forward and focusing on what's next paid off, and Moses and the Israelites got what they had prayed for for so long - freedom!
- What discouragement is holding you back from seeing the plan God has for you? When we decide to deal with our discouragement, we are able to understand and help others do the same. Take action today so that you can see clearly what God has planned next for you!



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