

INTRODUCING...MOSES: MR. NOBODY

A Study of Acts 7:20-36

Introduction to the Series – Moses: Mr. Nobody

By Dr. Stan Reeder

INTRODUCTION:

There was a Seminary professor teaching his students how to write sermons. One of the young men handed in his sermon. The professor took one look at it and began to chastise his student. “You have got to learn to write better sermon titles. This title is boring, it will never attract anyone’s attention. Sermon titles should be catchy, they should be engaging, they should be memorable; they should grab hold of people and make them want to listen.”

The young man wasn’t sure what he was being asked to do and so he asked, “How do I come up with a catchy title?”

The Seminary professor said, “It’s easy, just imagine that your sermon title is posted on a sign in front of the church. It is Sunday morning and a Greyhound bus full of people has stopped momentarily in front of your sign. You want a sermon title so catchy, so compelling, that all the people on the bus will jump off of the Greyhound and run into your church. Just think of it that way, and I’m sure you’ll come up with a great title.”

The student left to ponder the professor’s instruction. The next day he came back with his new title: “There is a bomb on your bus!”

That would get them into church.

For the next number of weeks we are going to be working through the life of Moses. As we begin our study, I want us to get an overarching view of Moses’ life. The passage in Acts 7 gives us a thumbnail sketch of Moses’ 120 years that he walked on this earth. If there is one thing that characterizes the life of Moses, it is humility.

The signature trait of Moses: humility (Numbers 12:3)

In Numbers 12:3 the Scripture says:

Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth (Numbers 12:3).

Interesting, if you study the word humble in Scripture you will note that the word was used to describe only two people in all of Scripture. Moses (here in Numbers 12:3) and one other in the New Testament: Jesus. In Matthew 11:29 Jesus gives us a rare self-description of what he is like:

I am gentle and humble in heart (Matt. 11:29).

Listen now to what we are to be like . . . Ephesians 4:2 – ***Be completely humble and gentle.***

The truth of the matter is this . . . there are great rewards to being gentle and humble in heart. A quick walk through Scripture and you can list the litany of what God does for the humble:

Psalms 25:9 – He guides the humble
147:6 – The Lord sustains the humble
Proverbs 3:34 – gives grace to the humble
Luke 1:42 – has lifted up the humble

Think about the benefits of humility:

Proverbs 11:2 – but with humility comes wisdom
15:33 – humility comes before honor
22:4 – Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth

Over and over throughout Scripture we are told of the benefits of humility. How do we become humble??

Some people are more concerned with keeping others humble...

The great author and speaker R.C. Sproul was asked how he deals with criticism. He told of how he responds to hateful, critical, vile, letters that he receives. He writes them back:

Dear so and so: I want to warn you about something dreadful that is happening. Some LUNATIC is sending me outrageous letters and is signing your name to them.

This is something we must do ourselves

Zephaniah 2:3 – Seek righteousness, seek humility
James 4:10 – humble yourselves toward the Lord
1 Peter 5:6 – Humble yourselves therefore under God's mighty hand that he may lift you up in due time.

Jesus makes it clear; four times he calls us to humble ourselves:

Matt. 18:4 – whoever humbles himself like this child is greatest in the kingdom of heaven
Matt. 23:12 – whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14:11, 18:14)

Humble yourselves . . . Not my will but thine be done . . . THEN you know what happens. He gives grace to you. Grace is the juice that fills your life. It is like those Gatorade advertisements on TV. They are drinking the Gatorade and they begin to sweat the color of the Gatorade they are drinking...blue, orange, yellow Gatorade oozes out of every pore of their bodies. It is the same way when God completely fills us with his gracious Holy Spirit...His grace begins to ooze out of us. His grace...

empowers you
and lifts you above the old ways

and takes you higher than you've ever been before
and fills you with his spirit and his love

But it only happens when you humble yourselves. And believe me, it will save you tremendous grief in your life because....The bottom line is either you humble yourself or God will humble you.

God has his ways to humble you . . . he has 6 billion humbling agents at his disposal:

There was a little girl who was getting ready to go to church one Sunday morning and she didn't want to go. She wasn't feeling too well . . . she had a stomach ache.

She hadn't eaten her breakfast yet and so her mother explained, "You have a stomach ache because your stomach is empty, if you put something in your stomach you'll feel better."

So she ate her breakfast and sure enough she felt better. She ended up going to church.

After church she was standing by the door. Someone came out of church and asked the pastor how he was feeling.

"Well, to be perfectly honest, I don't feel very well; I've got a head ache."

She went up to the pastor and said, "Mister, my mommy says the reason you have a headache is because you have nothing in your head. If you put something in your head, you'll feel better."

God had to humble Moses before he could use him.

The Martyr Stephen tells us there were three stages to Moses' life. These three stages outline how Moses became humble:

STEPHEN'S THREE STAGES TO MOSES' LIFE:

1. Moses spent his first 40 years being a somebody (Acts 7:17-22).

Steps to becoming a "Mr. Somebody":

- a) **"He was no ordinary child" (v. 20)** Now he is Mr. Ordinary!
- b) **He was raised as Pharaoh's daughter's "own son" (v. 21).** Now he is Jethro's son-in-law!
- c) **He "was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (v. 22a)** Now he has his education in Sheep Herding
- d) **He was "powerful in speech" (v. 22b)** Now he is the first to admit it: "I am slow in speech and tongue (Ex 4:11).
- e) **He was "powerful in action" (v. 22c).** Send someone else!!

Moses was extraordinarily gifted and had all the privileges of royalty. He had everything but humility....and so God could not use him.

2. Moses spent his second 40 years being a nobody (Acts 7:23-29).

Don't let this slip by you. Look what Moses was doing that led to his downfall: remember???

Steps to becoming a "Mr. Nobody":

- a) **"He decided to visit" (v. 23)**
- b) **"He saw one of them being mistreated" (v. 24a)**
- c) **"He went to his defense" (v. 24b)**
- d) **"Moses thought that his own people would realize" (v. 25)**
- e) **"He tried to reconcile them" (v. 26)**
- f) **"He fled to Midian" (v. 29a)**
- g) **"He settled as a foreigner" (v. 29b).**

He decided, he saw, he went, he thought, he tried, he fled, he settled as a foreigner. What are you settling for?...

Mr. Somebody? Limited by the Egypt's wisdom? Living by the Egypt's ways and Egypt's will?

Mr. Nobody? Limited by your wisdom? Living by your ways and your will?

There was a third stage to Moses' life:

3. Moses spent his third 40 years discovering what God can do with a nobody (Acts 7:30-36).

Steps to discovering what God can do with a "Mr. Nobody":

- a) **"he was amazed" (v. 31a)** When was the last time you were amazed by the presence of God?
- b) **"He heard the Lord's voice" (v. 31b)** When was the last time you sensed clearly, the Lord speaking to you?
- c) **He was obedient to every instruction (v. 33; Ex 3:4 - 4:12)** Are you being completely obedient to the Lord today?
- d) **He was sent (vs. 34, 35; Ex 3:12, 13, 14, 15; 4:12, 13).** Who is sending you these days? Is it the world's agenda that is sending you, is it your agenda that is sending you or is it the Lord sending you: "I am that I am has sent you."

It's no longer Egypt's – the world's – wisdom;

It's no longer Moses' wisdom;

It's God's Wisdom!

It's no longer Egypt's – the world's - way

It's no longer Moses' way

It's God's Way!

It is no longer Egypt's – the world's – will;
It's no longer Moses' will
It's God's Will!

It's no longer Egypt's words;
It's no longer Moses' words;
It's God's Word!

APPLICATION:

*Moses spent his first forty years thinking he was somebody .
He spent his second forty years thinking he was a nobody .
He spent his third forty years understanding what God can do with a nobody .*
- D. L. Moody

He got into a dimension that is way smarter, way bigger, way better
than anything the world has to offer;
than anything he had to offer
when we humble ourselves under God's mighty hand, He is able to do something way
bigger, way better than the world or we could have possibly pulled off!

It all starts with humbling ourselves:

I will no longer settle for Egypt's ways and will and wisdom and words.

I will no longer settle for my ways and will and wisdom and words.

I will only settle for God's Ways and Will and Wisdom and Word.

*Every one of us is in one of those three stages at this very moment. What is God speaking
to you about today?*

*Remember . . . He gives grace to the humble.
And his grace changes everything (2 Chronicles 7:14)!*

IF my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves, and pray and seek his
face, and turn from their wicked ways...

-- THEN --

He will hear from heaven, He will forgive our sins and he will bring healing in our land.
