

Just A Stick | Discussion Guide - Exodus 4:2-4, 20

Little things are powerful things when God uses them. Today we learn to stop complaining about our situation in life and start living the life that God intends.

When second officer David Blair was removed from the Titanic's roster at the last minute, he forgot to hand over the key to a locker in the crew's nest that secured the binoculars. After the ship sank, surviving lookout Fred Fleet believed that those binoculars might have prevented the iceberg collision that sank the ship. Forgetting to turn in a locker key is such a small oversight.

What if we could stop looking at life like everyone else does? Everyone else sees almost no value in much of daily life. It is called the "daily grind," and much is considered boring, tedious, or mundane.

Children don't see it that way. To a child, each day is a chance to play. A rock is a missile. A clod of dirt is a grenade. A teddy bear is a princess, and a stick holds endless possibilities. It could be a wand, a sword, or just about anything. There is a reason Jesus once said, **Mark 10:14 NLT** "*Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children.*" If we pay attention we could learn that there are no ordinary things. We might come to understand that little things can be very powerful things.

Exodus 4:2-4 NLT *Then the Lord asked him, "What is that in your hand?" "A shepherd's staff," Moses replied. 3 "Throw it down on the ground," the Lord told him. So Moses threw down the staff, and it turned into a snake! Moses jumped back. 4 Then the Lord told him, "Reach out and grab its tail." So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it turned back into a shepherd's staff in his hand.*

Exodus 4:20 NLT *So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey, and headed back to the land of Egypt. In his hand he carried the staff of God.*

God Planned to Use Moses' Life.

God told Moses to throw down his stick. (vs 3) Where do you think Moses got that stick? He didn't have it in Egypt when he first realized how cruel the world could be. He found that stick out in the wilderness. He found it in the same place that he found his wife, fathered his children and learned to raise sheep. That stick became a metaphor of sorts for Moses' life. It became his identity, his job, and his CRUTCH. Yes, it became His excuse for hiding from his destiny.

So, when God told him to throw it down, it wasn't just a stick Moses was releasing. But when Moses did throw it down, things got interesting. It had a life of its own. It's funny to watch as Moses runs away from his fallen stick, but the truth it reveals to us - about us - isn't funny at all. We may believe our life is ordinary and boring, but our potential frightens us.

God told Moses pick up the stick! (vs 4) "Grab Its TAIL?!" God says. You don't pick up a snake by the tail, but God knows what He is doing. He was forcing Moses to face his fears. Moses did pick up the snake/stick, but from that point on it was God's stick. (Ex 4:20, 17:9) And, that's how a guy with

a stick and stutter started his journey to free a nation of slaves.

God Plans to Use Your Life, Too

Surrender Your "Stick". Most just want to get through this life with as little drama as possible, but we have a purpose as Christ followers. Our victory begins when we throw down our "stick" and live for God.

Romans 14:7-8 NLT *For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. 8 If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.*

Face Your Fear. We cannot allow fear to define our lives. We must remember fear is a liar. Recall Moses' first encounter with Pharaoh. He threw down his staff and it became a snake, but Pharaoh wasn't impressed. Pharaoh's magicians had a trick up their sleeves. They had a few lies in their arsenal. But Moses "stick" ate their lies. Fear is a liar but a life surrendered to God will eat lies for breakfast. We have nothing to fear when our lives are surrendered to God.

But don't forget, You're Just a Stick. Maybe we should stop trying to be amazing. Everyone may tell us that we can be anything we want to be, but is that right? What about God's desire for us? Wouldn't it be better to be a "stick" God can use than to be anything else we could dream up? In God's story, surrender and simple obedience change the impossible situations, not awesome people. (1 Cor 1:27)

Your life may be a little thing in this world, but when God uses it, your life can set people free. It's amazing that one guy with a stick and a stutter was greater than all the armies of Egypt. Who knows, maybe you will be the next "stick and stutter" to set multitudes of people free.

Discussion

- Discuss some of the little things in life that you enjoy or that are critically important to you.
- Review Moses' story in Exodus 3 and 4. What do you think about the conversation between Moses and God? What surprises you? What comforts you?
- Consider Moses' story. Why do you think Moses was so afraid?
- Share a time you faced your fears. Are there any fears holding you back now that you could share with your group?
- Is it really okay to just be a "stick" that God can use? Why or why not? Is it true that you can be a "anything you want to be" as a Christ follower? Explain.
- Did anything stand out in your reading today that you could share with someone else?