A Different Call

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The LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. **2** You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his land. **3** But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and I will multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. **4** When Pharaoh does not listen to you, I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring my people the Israelites, company by company, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. **5** The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them.” **6** Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. **7** Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh. *(Exodus 7:1-7)*

1. The Eight-Year Engagement

While I was on board in the airplane to go to England, I watched a movie entitled, “The Eight-Year Engagement.” This is a Japanese movie based on a true story. A man called Hisashi and a woman called Mai fall in love. They are engaged to be married in 3 months. But before the wedding, Mai becomes seriously ill. Her heart stops and she falls into a deep coma. Hisashi visits her at the hospital every day before work. Since no one knows whether she will awake or not, her parents tell him not to come to the hospital anymore. They suggest that he look for someone else. But the man refuses to give up on his promise to marry their daughter Mai.

The man continues to pray for her recovery. More than a year later, his prayers are answered. Mai wakes from the coma. But she does not remember anything. Her doctor tells the family that she needs to relearn how to speak and move her body. The story ends with their marriage. It takes eight years for them to be a couple.

The movie was a touching story about not giving up despite a bad situation. It also teaches us how other people can play a big role in our life. Mai’s parents and her fiancé together have brought a miracle to her.

2. God Called Aaron to Assist Moses

In today’s scripture we notice that God calls Moses and his brother Aaron together. We can’t talk about the Exodus without Moses. But we need to remember that without Aaron, Moses may not have gone to Egypt.

In Exodus 7:1-2, God says to Moses, "***See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his land***."

When God calls Moses to go to Egypt, Moses says that he has never been eloquent. He says that "***he is slow of speech and slow of tongue***" (Exodus 4:10). Moses refuses God's call. He asks God to send someone else (Exodus 4:13). God becomes angry with Moses' excuses.

The Lord persuades Moses and says that his brother Aaron will go with him and shall speak to Pharaoh (Exodus 4:16). God has a perfect plan to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses and Aaron do not need to be afraid of Pharaoh at all.

3. God Called Charles Wesley

As God called Aaron to help Moses, God also called Charles Wesley to help John Wesley. John Wesley was certainly the most important person in the Methodist movement in 18th century in England. However, I learned that without Charles Wesley the Methodist movement may not have happened.

Charles Wesley was the eighteenth of Samuel and Susannah Wesley's nineteen children. He was born prematurely in December 1707. He studied at Westminster School and Oxford University.

Charles had a significant role in the Methodist movement. The Holy Club in Oxford University started with Charles Wesley and two friends. Charles later invited his brother John to lead the club. In 1735, Charles joined his brother John to become a missionary in the colony of Georgia. John was chaplain of the rough outpost, and Charles was a secretary to Governor Oglethorpe. They returned to England the following year.

After returning to England, Charles taught English to Moravian Peter Bohler, who prompted Charles to look at the state of his soul more deeply. In May 1738, Charles began reading Martin Luther's volume on Galatians while he was ill. Charles shortly found himself convinced, and wrote in his diary, "I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoice in hope of loving Christ." Three days later, John Wesley felt his heart strangely warmed when he listened to the reading of the preface to the Romans at a Moravian Society meeting on Aldersgate Street.

4. Hymn Writer Charles Wesley

The most important contribution that Charles Wesley made to the Methodist movement is the hymns that Charles wrote. Do you know how

many hymns and poems Charles Wesley wrote? Take a guess. I will give you four numbers. Is it 400, 900, 4,000, or 9,000? The correct answer is 9,000 hymns and poems. In the UMC hymnal there are 51 hymns, 8 poems, and 6 responsive readings that Charles Wesley wrote. All the songs we sang and are going to sing today except the Doxology were written by Charles Wesley. We continue to sing God's praises through the music that Charles Wesley wrote hundreds of years ago.

Many people say that Charles is "the greatest hymn writer of all ages." Without the hymns of Charles, the Methodist movement may not have gone beyond England. A historian says, "The early Methodists were taught and led as much through (Charles') hymns as through (John's) sermons and pamphlets." I visited Wesley's Chapel in London where John and Charles Wesley preached. I learned that the church is thriving greatly with people coming from around the world. Let's take a look at the congregation as they sing one of Charles Wesley's hymns at their Sunday worship service.

5. Spouses are Called to Assist

The Bible tells us that God calls not only a key person but also people who would assist him or her. Genesis 2:22 says, "***The rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.***" God noticed Adam needed a helper and partner to take care of God's creation.

Just like our spouses and the other people we partner with in our lives, God has called each of us to live for Christ and to help others in their journey with Christ. Christine, my wife, didn't think she would be a pastor's wife. But God knew that I would need her help and that she would be an integral part in reaching out and ministering to God's people. Praise God for giving each of us as partners and supporters of each other as we serve our Lord.

6. Conclusion

God called Adam and Eve, Moses and Aaron, Paul and the early apostles, and John and Charles Wesley as partners to fulfill the things that God wanted to do in and through their lives. God called the early Methodists in Sagamore, MA to organize a Methodist Society and build a meeting house in this community. This was the beginning of our church, Swift Memorial UMC.

Why are we here this morning? We are here to worship God in the same place. Each one of us is called by God to worship Him and for a specific purpose for God's kingdom.

Exodus 7:7 says, "***Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh***." Moses and Aaron may have thought they were too old and would have many excuses not to go to Egypt. But God convinced Moses and sent Aaron with him.

I never knew I would serve at Swift Memorial UMC until 2 years ago. But I believe that God called me and each one of us to this area and our church to worship the Lord and to love God's people here in our community.

7. Application

There are 7 billion people on the planet, yet each person is unique. No two people are the same and God has created each and every person to this world to fulfill God's dream on the earth. We may not always know all the details, but each of us is called to God's unique mission for our lives. Our presence here at this time isn't by accident.

In Exodus 7:1, "***The Lord said Moses***, ***See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet***." There are situations where we can be scared of chasing after a dream God has given us. Moses felt this in Exodus. Yet God reminded Moses that there was nothing to be afraid of. Moses was sent by God and supported with his brother Aaron. As long as Moses followed God's leading, God would take care of everything and lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

While in England, I had the opportunity to visit Salisbury Cathedral, a church of England. Many volunteers served at the church as tour guides for visitors. These volunteers aren't well known in the greater Christian history, but each person was serving the Lord even in seemingly simple ways like being a host to others.

What kind of things is God speaking to you about this morning? God calls each of us not only to be saved but to serve and share the same love that we receive from God with others. God calls us every day to opportunities to serve God's church and the people of this community as followers of Jesus. I pray that we respond to God's calling and use our lives to bring Jesus to our community and the people around us. Amen.