

Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible
Reading ■ Giving Time, Talents & Resources
■ Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Be-
yond the Church

June 2, 2019

Day 1: I Peter 2:1-3

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Peter asks us to discard our old ways just as we would discard clothing that will no longer keep us warm. There is an allusion to both Baptism and Eucharist in this verse. The sacraments shape the whole of our lives, as individuals and as a people. In the early church candidates for baptism would remove their old clothes before going into the water and be given a new robe upon coming out of the water. Persons confessing Christ as Lord and becoming baptized were born from above and as a newborn they needed nourishment that fit their stage of growth. We have tasted and discovered that the Lord is good. In Baptism we put off the old self and in Eucharist we taste that the Lord is good.

Question: How does one "taste" the Lord?

Challenge: Try to describe what a "grown up" Christian would look like.

Scripture: I Corinthians 3

Day 2: I Peter 2:4-5

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

In the Holy Land, during biblical times, if one wanted to build a significant building then stone needed to be used. Not just something a person could pick up and carry but something that might weigh 20-30 tons. Jesus is the foundation but unlike other stones, this foundation is living. No one would build a house on something living because it might move. But we build our life on the living Christ and we become living stones. This is God's house and unlike the Temple where live things were offered by killing them, we offer sacrifices (something given to God) that will give life.

Question: What is a spiritual sacrifice?

Challenge: Think of the church as a house. What kind of rooms do we need and what would they be used for?

Scripture: Psalm 118

Day 3: I Peter 2:6-7

For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, the stone the builders rejected has become the capstone.

The difference between Christian and non-Christian is not that we see different things but that we see the same things differently. Both see Jesus as the rock. Christians see the rock as the cornerstone or foundation and non Christians see the rock as something hard and to be rejected. The truth is that we will build our life on something. If we reject Christ and His church then we build our life in the flood plane and when the waters come (and they will) then our life is washed away and we are most miserable.

Question: Where do you think Zion is?

Challenge: For a foundation stone to be a good one what would it look like?

Scripture: Luke 6:46-49

Day 4: I Peter 2:8

and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

Our spiritual sacrifice is obedience. We were chosen by God to be obedient and if we are not then we have chosen to be disobedient. We have had problems in the church in that the leaders to whom we are to be obedient are (at times) telling us to do things that are not from God, but rather from their own ideas of what God wants. We want to choose who to follow and we want others to follow our direction. We too often believe we know what God wants and are not willing to take the time to listen. We need to listen to the Scripture, other Christians, and pray.

Question: Why bother sharing the message if they were destined to disobey?

Challenge: If the foundation stones are Jesus' teachings then which of His teachings do you stumble and fall over?

Scripture: Psalm 18

Day 5: I Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Peter tells us that in Christ we are a new people who are building a life and a community on the basis of love and humility, not power and pride. We worship God most perfectly when we, like the Jews in the Exodus, organize our life around God's law and become a light to the world. God wants us to shine the light of Christ into the dark places in peoples' lives so that they see what is real and see where hope lies.

Question: What is the darkness and what is the light in this verse?

Challenge: Do you feel chosen by God? If so, how did it happen and if not, will you choose now to accept God's gift of salvation and declare that Jesus is Lord?

Scripture: Exodus 19:4-6

Day 6: I Peter 2:10

Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Peter makes the bold statement that has been made by Paul in a couple of places (Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:11 & I Corinthians 12:13) that we are a new race—Christians. We may live in different countries but we are one race, a people chosen by God to build a place for all creation to live.

Question: What is the word that conveys to you the essence of who God is?

Challenge: Think about the difference between justice and mercy.

Scripture: Hosea 2

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In & Beyond the Church

June 9, 2019

Day 1: Romans 10:9

because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved

To confess is to make a positive statement of what you believe. In this case it is about believing Jesus is God. When Paul was writing these words most of the Roman world believed in some sort of divine power. In fact, the Christians were called atheists by one Roman writer because they did not believe in all the other gods. The importance of actually saying the words, "Jesus is Lord," is that if the words are kept private (but in our mind) then they are not real. What we are asked to believe and state publicly is that —God raised Jesus from the dead.

Question: Why do you believe Jesus was raised from the dead?

Challenge: Write a positive statement of what you believe.

Scripture: 1 John 3:22-4:8

Day 2: Romans 10:10

For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

The heart, for Paul, is not the seat of emotion but the very core of the personality. It is at this core that the transformation must take place. Genuine heart-level belief can only come about by the divine action of the Spirit. Faith is the sign that the gospel has done its work. The act of confessing and believing is not two parts but one. What is true for us is that we do not know what we believe until we state it. A belief that stays in our head may appear to be known but in fact it is not until it is said. Now the "saying" can be in actions, but verbally or by action it is still public. Jesus said that a person born of the Spirit can be compared to the wind. We cannot see it but we can see its effects.

Question: If one acknowledges Christ as Lord with our heart, why does a person need to say something?

Challenge: How could a person "confess with their mouth" if they could not speak?

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:11-5:3

Day 3: Romans 10:11

The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.'

Shame is the feeling of not being good enough. Shame affects us differently from guilt (the feeling of doing something wrong) because we will try harder to hide our shame than our guilt. When our guilt is exposed we are not happy but we believe there is a way to put the guilt behind us. When our shame is exposed there is no way to say, "I am sorry - I have done something wrong," because what we fear is wrong is not our act, but our very self. Humans will do almost anything to cover up shame and not let it be seen. There is a movie about a WW II German female prison guard who could have avoided prison by admitting she could not read. Her shame at being unable to read caused her go to prison for the rest of her life. Guilt can be dealt with by forgiveness but shame can only be dealt with by letting someone see your "shame" and still love you.

Question: Why would one be ashamed to believe in Jesus as Lord?

Challenge: Think about a time you felt guilt and when you felt shame. Which was worse for you?

Scripture: Isaiah 60:19-22

Day 4: Romans 10:12-13

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

We have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory. Jesus came into the world not to condemn but that all might be saved through Him. With these two verses in mind we see that we become part of the family of God through adoption, not birth. It is Paul's vision that both Jew and Gentile will come together in God's kingdom. Even though Paul is called the apostle to the Gentiles he always firmly believed that God would not abandon His first love.

Question: What does it mean to call on the name of the Lord?

Challenge: Rewrite the first part of the verse (there is no distinction between Jew and Greek) using different words to describe two sets of people.

Scripture: Joel 2

Day 5: Romans 10:14-15

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'

God is willing to listen to all who call upon Him but how will they hear unless they are told? We become the hands, feet and the voice of God's word of hope. However, a single person cannot do this great task nor is a single person supposed to do this task. It is the task of the church - the whole body of Christ - to send those who will carry the message. The job of proclaiming the Good News falls to the whole body. One of the key parts of our missionary task is to send. Sending is that act of spiritually going with those doing the preaching. When one or many go, we all go and we must support with our prayers and money those who are in fulltime missionary work here or abroad.

Question: Where is it written (in the Old Testament), 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news?'

Challenge: Look at the UMC web site for a list of Missionaries and commit to pray for one of them this next month

Scripture: Isaiah 52

Day 6: Romans 10:16-17

But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our message?' So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.'

Not all will respond but that is not our worry. When Jonah was sent to warn Nineveh they repented and were saved. He did not know he would be successful but he went (eventually) to preach. We will plant, another will water, and another will reap the harvest. God calls us to be faithful, not successful.

Question: What does it mean to "obey" the Good News?

Challenge: What is God calling you to do this week?

Scripture: Jonah

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June 16, 2019

Day 1: Exodus 1:6-10

Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and that whole generation. But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them. Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, 'Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.'

God's command in Genesis (be fruitful and multiply - Genesis 1:28) was to be followed no matter where the chosen people happened to live. When God's people are faithful to God's leading they will always be fruitful. Sadly, being fruitful or successful will cause jealousy on the part of others. The new king is afraid that the number of Israelites will cause them to want to take the land for themselves. Fear and greed caused the Egyptian leaders to enslave the Israelites. Fear and greed still cause leaders to enslave people to this day.

Question: Can you recall how Joseph became an important person in Egypt and why his brothers and their families came to Egypt?

Challenge: Where in the world can we see this kind of thinking going on? (Come, let us deal shrewdly with them)

Scripture: Genesis 1:24-31, Genesis 50:19-26

Day 2: Exodus 1:11-12

Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites.

God's plan will not be derailed by the forces of evil. Even the forced labor and lack of freedom did not stop the Israelites from growing in number. As the numbers grew so did the fear on the part of the Egyptians, so that the Egyptians took drastic and hateful steps to stop their growth.

Question: Can you think of some other options the Egyptians might have used to deal with their fear of the Israelites?

Challenge: How do you deal with your fear that another group might take what you have?

Scripture: Psalm 9

Day 3: Exodus 1:13-16

The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them. The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 'When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.'

One of the most chilling events in the Bible is the king acting in a demonic fashion by ordering midwives to violate their calling (to help bring new life into the world) by killing the boy babies. Because the king is fearful and has the power, he uses that power to kill. It is the combination of fear and power that brought about the king's terrible order. The girls were to be spared because they were not a military threat.

Question: What thoughts do you think the midwives had as they heard the king's command?

Challenge: Think of three or four of your most cherished beliefs. What would it take for you to violate one of those beliefs?

Scripture: Exodus 5:1-23

Day 4: Exodus 1:17-22

But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?' The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.' So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.'

Having the power to command the midwives to do as awful an act as killing babies is one thing but actually forcing someone to do it is another. The courage of the midwives was great. They defy the king who could easily order their death. They do not simply say no to the king but use his ignorance regarding childbirth against him. The king will not give up on his plan and now orders all Egyptians to join in the genocide.

Question: Who do you think would carry out the king's command to "all the people"?

Challenge: Think about this for a bit - why would God reward the midwives for their action of not following the king's command?

Scripture: Matthew 2:13-23

Day 5: Exodus 2:2-4

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The story of Moses' birth is well known. His mother places him in the Nile. In Egyptian lore the Nile is a sacred river that provides life, giving water for the fields. Moses's mother trusts that God will now care for her child because she can no longer keep him safe.

Question: Why only three months?

Challenge: Think about what it was like for parents to see their children come to this country years ago, knowing they would never see them again.

Scripture: Numbers 1:42-52

Day 6: Exodus 2:5-8

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

This story is one where God uses an evil act (the casting of the boys into the river) for God's own purposes. The instrument of God's plan for the freeing of the Israelites will be trained in the very house that is enslaving his people. Moses learns about being a leader of a great number of people while he was at the palace. The one to lead the people to freedom grows up in the center of Egyptian power.

Question: How did Moses get his name?

Challenge: How was Pharaoh's daughter able to keep Moses a secret?

Scripture: Exodus 2:11-25

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June 23, 2019

Day 1: Exodus 2:11-12

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and saw their forced labour. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsfolk. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

Moses must have had some idea as to who his kinsfolk really were. He was raised as a prince of Egypt but he was a Hebrew. We do not know how many times Moses watched as his kinsfolk slaved away for Pharaoh. We do not know how long it took for Moses to reject being part of the problem (enjoying the fruits of being the master) and become willing to be part of the solution. His first foray into helping his people was to kill the overseer who was beating one of his "kinsfolk" and hide his body.

Question: How do you think Moses learned who his "people" really were?

Challenge: How far back can you go in tracing your family history?

Scripture: Exodus 1:8-22

Day 2: Exodus 2:13-14

When he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrews fighting; and he said to the one, who was in the wrong, 'Why do you strike your fellow Hebrew?' He answered, 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?' Then Moses was afraid and thought, 'Surely the thing is known.'

Moses was trying to help his people using the tools of the enslavers. Pharaoh and his army had the power to force the Hebrews to work. Power is very tricky and when one has it, especially over another, the temptation to use it for your own gain is almost impossible to resist. Moses had the desire to help his people but in his mind the only way to help was to use his power to kill the Egyptian doing the beating. The response of the two men fighting brings Moses up short. They do not see his action against the Egyptian as really helping the cause of freeing the Hebrews from bondage.

Question: Why don't the two men fighting see Moses as a helpful person?

Challenge: Think about the way you have used your power over someone - was it for their benefit or yours?

Scripture: Acts 7:24-34

Day 3: Exodus 2:15

When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh. He settled in the land of Midian, and sat down by a well.

The action moves quickly from Egypt to Midian. Biblical Midian is located across the Gulf of Aqaba in modern Saudi Arabia. Moses would have gone across the Red Sea, down the Sini, and across the Gulf of Aqaba to reach Midian. The people there make their living herding sheep. Moses' journey could have been 300 - 500 miles.

Question: Why would Pharaoh want to kill Moses?

Challenge: When have you run away from a problem and how did running away work out for you?

Scripture: Genesis 37:23-33

Day 4: Exodus 2:16-17

The priest of Midian had seven daughters. They came to draw water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. But some shepherds came and drove them away. Moses got up and came to their defense and watered their flock.

Moses has a chance to confront powerful men again. This time he rescues the women but does not kill the men abusing them. He does make sure the women's flocks were given water. Moses does not use excessive force but just enough to make sure the daughters were not denied the life giving water the sheep needed, because they were weaker than the other shepherds.

Question: Who was this priest of Midian?

Challenge: Can you think of another person at a well that was helped by a servant of God?

Scripture: Psalm 116, John 4:7-26

Day 5: Exodus 2:18-22

When they returned to their father Reuel, he said, 'How is it that you have come back so soon today?' They said, 'An Egyptian helped us against the shepherds; he even drew water for us and watered the flock.' He said to his daughters, 'Where is he? Why did you leave the man? Invite him to break bread.' Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage. She bore a son, and he named him Gershom; for he said, 'I have been an alien residing in a foreign land.'

Moses has come to Midian to learn how to be a leader and how to use power in a way that brings freedom. He is being prepared to meet God and to become God's servant. Moses had to learn that freedom means to worship God, take pleasure in your toil, see your children and grandchildren grow up, and know that you have one master, the Lord God Almighty.

Question: What other name is Reuel known by?

Challenge: Can you think of a time when you stepped in to help someone being pushed around by others stronger than they?

Scripture: Exodus 17:14-18:8

Day 6: Exodus 2:23-25

After a long time the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

The groaning of the Israelites is more than complaining, it demonstrates a willingness to do whatever it takes to be free from their bondage. They had no idea at this time what freedom would mean but they were ready to risk all they had to become free. The people had to admit they were powerless to change their condition but that there was someone who could change it. They had to be willing to give up what they had in order to be free. Today many people are in bondage to one thing or another. To get out of bondage one has to admit they cannot free themselves - there is a power greater than themselves that can and they have to be willing to turn over their will and life to the one who can free them.

Question: Why is the fact that the king of Egypt died important?

Challenge: Think back to the covenant God made to Abraham - Genesis 14:4-8

Scripture: Psalm 142

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June 30, 2019

Day 1: Exodus 3:1-3

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

Then Moses

said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.

Moses notices that God is calling. Moses has been prepared (by his life experiences and his willingness) to receive God's summons. The angel never says anything but stands by while God speaks. Moses has spent a number of years learning how to be a husband, father, shepherd, and to work for someone else. He is now ready, after learning all those things, to be a leader of people seeking freedom.

Question: Why is God on a mountain?

Challenge: Can you look back and recall when you have had an experience of seeing an image of God?

Scripture: I Samuel 3:1-21, Isaiah 6

Day 2: Exodus 3:4-6

When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

God spoke to summon Moses now God speaks to alert him that he is on holy ground - ground that is totally filled with the presence of God. In this passage the removal of sandals removes any separation between God and Moses. The voice from the burning bush now identifies who is talking to Moses by stating the history of God's involvement with the people of Abraham. God has been with Moses' family for many generations. Even though there have been a number of years when no one has been receiving God's words still God has remained faithful to his promise to be with the children of Abraham (Genesis 17:6-7).

Question: What made the ground holy?

Challenge: Think of some reasons why a person would be afraid to look directly at the face of God.

Scripture: Joshua 5:13-15, Ruth 4:2-12, Deuteronomy 25:5-10

Day 3: Exodus 3:7-8

Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

The Lord has seen, has heard, and has known. The Lord has come down is a way of saying that God is now coming to the people and taking a hand in alleviating their suffering. The land of milk and honey is one where both farmers and shepherds can live. Just as in creation God provided the whole world for plants, animals, and people to live, so now God is promising them a land where they can grow and live freely.

Question: Why, if God has seen the people suffering, has God not done something sooner?

Challenge: The words "a land flowing with milk and honey" were hopeful to those in bondage. What words of hope would you offer to persons in bondage to some affliction today?

Scripture: Deuteronomy 26:4-14

Day 4: Exodus 3:9-12

The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'

Moses receives the bad news that he is the one to act for God to free the people. Moses has five reasons for god not sending him to do this task. He, like us, feels unprepared to do the task in God's name. Even though we know that whatever we do in Jesus' name will succeed still we are concerned that maybe we are not up to the task. Just as Moses saved the daughters from the shepherds so God will save Israel from slavery. Reason 1, "who am I?" God does not answer but simply says I am with you and by implication if God is with us who could be against us.

Question: Moses asks God to reconsider sending him. Did Jesus ever ask God to reconsider what God was asking of Him?

Challenge: When have you felt not up to a task you needed to do?

Scripture: Judges 6:11-24

Day 5: Exodus 3:13-14

But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "I am has sent me to you."'

Reason 2, "who are you?" God says I will be who I will be or I am the one who created life and gave it to all creatures. I am the one who has loved you even when you did not realize or appreciate it. Reason 3 is the fear that he will be rejected just as he was rejected by the two Hebrews he tried to help after he killed the Egyptian. God gives him the strategy to talk to both the Egyptians and Israelites. First talk to the elders. Then confront the King and lastly use the power God gives you to demonstrate God's determination to free the people.

Question: Why talk to the elders of the tribes first?

Challenge: What is the reason Moses is to give Pharaoh to let the people go and do?

Scripture: Exodus 5:1-9

Day 6: Exodus 4:10-14

But Moses said to the Lord, 'O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' Then the Lord said to him, 'Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.'

Reason 4 and 5 have to do with public speaking. Moses says he cannot talk well and God says it's not you talking but me talking through you. Moses says his speech is halting and not good and God (now irritated) tells him that his brother Aaron will speak for him. This marks a change in the way God will communicate; giving the power for doing God's work to more than one person. Up to this point God has worked with one person at a time. From now on there'll be teams of people that have the power to do God's work. This extends all the way to the New Testament when Jesus sent disciples out two by two. In the 21st century when we want to begin a new faith community we send a team of people to begin the work, not just one person.

Question: Why does Moses say he is slow of tongue? Do you think he gets nervous or does he have a speech problem?

Challenge: What reasons have you given to God for not taking up a task in Jesus' name?

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12