

“Who is the Lord”
Exodus 5:1-9
(Preached at Trinity, October 8, 2006)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As this chapter opens we finally come to the anticipated moment as Moses and Aaron come into the presence of Pharaoh. Without hesitation they deliver the message of God: **Exodus 5:1** – “Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.”
 - A. Moses tells Pharaoh two aspects of our duty before God
Verse 1 – “that they may hold a feast” – This suggests God’s people coming before God with great delight and enjoyment.
Verse 3 – “and sacrifice unto the LORD our God” – This points to glorifying God by offering sacrifice to him.
 - B. We find here Israel fulfilling God’s chief end for man – to glorify and enjoy our Creator.
2. It has been suggested that Moses is being deceitful in **Verse 3** perhaps out of fear – “let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God”
 - A. On one hand this could be God testing Pharaoh. It was not uncommon for the Egyptian Pharaoh’s to allow the slaves time to worship their gods. This would not have been an unreasonable request. Would Pharaoh be willing to submit to God with so small a request?
 - B. On the other hand, Moses says nothing about any plan to return – only that they would be traveling three days journey to worship.
 - C. Moses is showing no fear here. His initial feelings of inadequacy have disappeared into faith and obedience.
3. Notice in **Verse 1** the force of Moses’ statement before Pharaoh. It was a powerful message that carried great authority. This was a message from God. Moses states clearly, “Thus saith the LORD.”
This by the way is the entire message of Scripture. All of the Word of God carries the preface, “Thus saith the LORD.”
2 Timothy 3:16 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”
4. God makes demands upon humanity. He commands obedience to His will. His command to Pharaoh was not merely a suggestion and obedience was not an option. But due to the wickedness of Pharaoh’s heart he denied God’s right to rule over him.
5. Pharaoh’s answer to God’s reveals his heart:
Exodus 5:2 – “Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice”
 - a. This was not the sincere enquiry of one seeking God. Pharaoh has no intention of obeying God.
“I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.”

- b. When Pharaoh looked upon Israel all he saw was a weak, broken, oppressed people. Why should he submit to Moses and Aaron and why should he submit to their God. If He were such a powerful God then how come these Hebrew people are slaves?
6. Pharaoh's answer to God's command is universal in scope.
- A. It is the answer that all men give by their actions.
Exodus 5:2 – "Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice"
- B. It is the answer all men give by their words.
John 19:15 – "But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar."
7. In other words all men declare in their heart, "What right does God have to tell me what to do?" Even some religious people do this. They demonstrate with their heart that they don't know God. "I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go."
8. This is what is called practical atheism. It is living as though God did not exist or living as if God has no authority to rule over us.
9. Tonight I want to look at Pharaoh's question and give you the answer.
"Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice"
Who is God and what right does He have to make demands of us? In the Exodus God will be giving Pharaoh a lesson in theology – a lesson in the Doctrine of God.
- I. First, we need to look at the Person of God
- A. This God is the eternal, self-existing God
1. This is the answer God gave to Moses
 2. He is the God that is – He is above our existence. We are nothing, less than nothing in comparison. He is worthy of our submission
- B. This God is our Creator
1. God has given us life and being
Acts 17:28 – "For in him we live, and move, and have our being"
 2. As Creator God owns all things – All things were created by God and for God
Psalm 89:11 – "The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them."
Colossians 1:16 – "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"
Psalm 89:11 – "The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: as for the world and the fullness thereof, thou hast founded them."
 3. God is described as the great Potter who has shaped men according to His good pleasure.
Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou *art* our father; we *are* the clay, and thou our potter; and we all *are* the work of thy hand.
Romans 9:21 – "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"
 4. As Owner and Creator God has the right to manage His creation as He sees fit. He has the right to expect His creation to submit to His will.

5. Pharaoh didn't recognize that this God was His maker, that his very breath found it's source in God
Pharaoh also didn't recognize that even in His stubborn wicked rebellion He was still under God's dominion.
Romans 9:17 – "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."
- C. This God is absolutely Holy – He is separate from sin. He is set apart from creation - He is called, "Holy, Holy, Holy"
 1. All failure to submit to God is sin
 2. As the most Holy God all sin is an assault upon His holy character – all that is defiled must be cast far from Him.
 3. The great sin of humanity is that they do not properly fear God
Psalm 36:1 – "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *that there is* no fear of God before his eyes."
Romans 3:18 – "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
 - a. It is easy to sin when you have no fear of the consequences
 - b. Multitudes will ignore God on this Lord's Day because they have no fear
 4. Pharaoh had no fear of God because He had no idea who God was - He is the Holy Creator that demands all men everywhere to bow before Him.
- D. This God is also omnipresent
 1. You cannot escape the notice of this God – He is always there
 2. Pharaoh did not know that this great God was present even while he arrogantly denied him. He must have believed that the Hebrew God was far away.

II. Second, we need to look at the power of God

- A. God governs His creation with great power
 1. Creation was accomplished with just a spoken word
 2. God rules the earth with His great power
God's dominion is boundless, universal, absolute
 - a. Stephen Charnock describes the power of God –
"The power of God is that ability and strength whereby He can bring to pass whatsoever He pleases, whatsoever His infinite wisdom may direct, and whatsoever the infinity purity of His will may resolve."
 - b. Foolish, vain human beings insist on ruling their own lives.
In reality God rules all things and we must submit
 3. Nothing can stop God from accomplishing His will
Daniel 4:35 – "And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

4. All things are move because God has determined it
Isaiah 46:9-11 – “Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: ¹¹ Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.”
- B. Pharaoh vainly believed that he was all powerful
1. The pharaoh’s were seen as gods
 2. Pharaoh had a massive army with chariots and horses.
He didn’t realize how impotent chariots and horses were in the presence of the living God.
 3. Years later Israel would trust in Egypt to protect them from the Assyrians. God spoke through Isaiah to rebuke them in their folly.
Isaiah 31:1-3 – “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because *they are* many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD! ² Yet he also *is* wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity. ³ Now the Egyptians *are* men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.”

III. Third, we need to look at the Provision of God

- A. Pharaoh did not know that this God he was denying was the source of his life
1. Every harvest is brought in by the provision of God
 2. The very air we breathe is supplied by God
 3. Over 400 years before God had delivered Egypt from a famine that would have destroyed them – God raised up Joseph
- B. The reality of life on this earth points to the miraculous provision of God
1. All the conditions must be maintained perfectly for life to exist upon our tiny planet. God maintains those conditions
 2. The water cycle continues perfectly. The perfect mixture of air continues perfectly. The harvests of food continue to sustain life upon our world.
 3. Everything we have upon this earth is provided by God
One of the names of God is Jehovah Jireh – God our Provider
 4. The lost man enjoys the marvelous beauty of this world
He enjoys all of the material comforts
He enjoys the richness of life
 5. The wicked heart of man causes him to deny the One who gives all of these things.
 6. This was Pharaoh’s problem
“Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice”
 - a. He is the God who placed you in power
 - b. He is the God who fed you your food this morning

- c. He is the God who gave you your royal robes
- d. He is the God who is maintaining your life
- 7. What wickedness to deny this goodness
Romans 2:4 – “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
- 8. God deserves our full devotion and worship
- C. The greatest provision of God is Jesus His Son
 - 1. In Christ we have found forgiveness and reconciliation
 - 2. In Christ we have found true life – Paradise restored
 - 3. All that God has given us is undeserved. We deserve none of His rich blessings. Oh how much we have to be thankful for. True gratitude leads us to worship God, to obey Him, to serve Him, to love Him.
Luke 7:47 – “Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth little.*”

Conclusion:

1. We owe God our absolute allegiance. We owe Him our lives. He is worthy of our obedience because of His divine Person, because of His infinite Power, because of His gracious provision.
2. Proud men think they are too great to bow before God. Why do men today disregard God and His law.
Why do most Americans believe homosexuality is perfectly OK. Shouldn't a man be free to live in any way he chooses?
Why is abortion the law of our land. Shouldn't a woman be free to do with her body anyway she chooses.
Why do most people disregard the Sabbath Day? Shouldn't we be free to do what we please on this day?
Why do most people see adultery and fornication as no great sin. Shouldn't we be able to seek every pleasure?
Why do most people continue in sin. Because they deny God.
“Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice”
3. God tells us how foolish it is to deny Him.
Psalms 53:1 – “The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God.* Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: *there is none that doeth good.*”
4. No one can stand against God.
Psalms 2:4-5 – “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. ⁵ Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.”
Daniel 4:35 – “And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”
5. Pharaoh with all his might and power could not stand before this God. Have you submitted to Him – not out of the fear of His power but out of a love for His gracious person?