

Rev. Anne J. Scalfaro
22 June 2025

10:30 a.m. MT Worship
Second Sunday after Pentecost

Calvary Baptist Church
Denver, Colorado

***“This is Us: Making Excuses for why We CAN’T
This is Good News: God Equips Us so We CAN***

2nd sermon in the Summer Series: *This is Us: Seeing Ourselves in Scripture...Reflecting Good News in our Lives*

NOTE: A sermon is a spoken word event. This manuscript served as a guide but is not exact to what was preached in the moment.

***Exodus 3:7-12 / Exodus 3:13-15 / Exodus 4:1-9 /
Exodus 4:10-12 / Exodus 4:13-17 / Exodus 4:18-20 (paraphrased)***

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

Before we get to Moses, I need
a moment for Jesus.

In the same post where
President Trump announced that
the United States has dropped
massive bombs on three nuclear
sites in Iran, effectively entering
the U.S. in a war without
provocation and without the
approval of congress, he also
said, *“Now is the time for
peace.”*

I admit that these days I lack the
imagination to know what true
peace looks like, but what I do
know is this: Peace cannot
coexist with dropping bombs.
Peace is not initiated by lying
about so-called diplomatic
solutions and negotiations while
obliterating the leaders you
would be negotiating with.

“Blessed are the peacemakers,”
said Jesus, *“for they will be
called children of God,”* (Matt.
5:9)

I wonder what this makes
us...?...children of war?

Americans are not peacemakers.
We are a military machine.
What does it say about our
priorities that we are bragging
about the fact that “we are the
only ones who have the kind of
bombs, planes, and military
power” that could have done
this type of attack on Iran? This
is something we are proud of?
Our obsession with war, might,
and power is not new news. But
as of last night, the stakes could
not be higher. No one wants
nuclear weapons of course. But
we just gave Iran even more
reason to want to use one when
or if they have one.

I am not an expert in geo-
politics or world wars or nuclear
weapons; I am a pastor. So I’ll
speak truth on what I am
charged with proclaiming: The
actions President Trump
authorized on behalf of us all

last night are not “of God.” God does not bless war. God does not bless dropping bombs. As millions of lives and livelihoods are desecrated, God grieves, and we should too. No matter how much we say we “love God” and are “acting in the name of God,” that does not make our actions God-ordained or God-blessed. God does not love war or the loss of any human life. Nor does God bless one person over another, or one country over another.¹

Don’t let the Zionist, Christian Nationalist language lead you to think that because God’s name is invoked, something is “holy” or “of God.” God blesses the world, not our human created borders that separate God’s people into countries that then stake our claim to land as our “own” so that we then “defend it” and be at war with one another over it. We’ve created this vicious, violent cycle of war begetting war begetting war.

Yet we know from the Greatest Commandment that telling God we love God means nothing if we do not love God’s people—ALL God’s people.

Sound too lofty and naïve for these times we are living in? Of course it does. The propaganda of leaders who lead with authoritarian force want us to think that war is the only way to achieve peace. But *we* must not forget the way of Christ. The way of Love. The way of God Incarnate—Love Incarnate. Lest we not forget that Jesus died on the cross at the hands of Empire—not fighting back because to fight back would be the way of violence, not the way of Love.

Empire crucifies and kills God Incarnate, Love Incarnate. Or so it thinks. On the Third Day, Christ rises to proclaim a different truth: Love, Hope, Life Wins. Love is the Way. And what does the Risen Christ do on the very first day of his Defeat of Death? He appears to his disciples huddled together in fear in a locked room? The Risen Christ, Love Incarnate, God Incarnate walks through the locked doors of fear, and *breathes peace* into the middle of their fear: saying: “*Peace be with you,*” (John 20:19). Peace, not revenge. Peace, not ‘go get

¹ President Trump’s Truth Social Post: “We have completed our very successful attack on the three Nuclear sites in Iran, including Fordow, Natanz, and Esfahan. All planes are now outside of Iran air space. A full payload of BOMBS was dropped on the primary

site, Fordow. All planes are safely on their way home. Congratulations to our great American Warriors. There is not another military in the World that could have done this. NOW IS THE TIME FOR PEACE! Thank you for your attention to this matter.” Jun 21, 2025, 5:50 PM.

the bad guys who did this to me.
Peace.

I imagine the disciples might have said: *“Peace? But you were just brutally murdered on a cross? Peace, really?!”* “Yes, peace,” Jesus says. *“Peace be with you.”* It’s the same thing I taught you on the mountain side, *“Blessed are the peacemakers”* and it’s the same thing I said when I told you I would be leaving you, *“My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid,”* (John 14:27).

These are the words of Jesus—*Jesus* the one we believe represents to us WHO God is and WHAT God embodies and wants for us in the world.
Peace.

When the words of our country’s leadership invoke war, may the words of our Savior, our true Lord, ring louder—*Peace*. Friends, keep speaking peace, keep acting in peace, keep praying for peace. ***We must not let the message of Christ die, especially not in service of our country over and above others.***

So we pray for peace. And then what? What else are we to do in this time where one person holds so much power that we begin to feel powerless?

We take seriously the decisions that are before us in our own lives. Because so much is at stake and *it matters* how we use our gifts and skills and passions and labors in the world.

Which brings us to Moses. God has a calling for Moses and God has a calling for each and every one of us right now in this moment.

And Moses’ call is located in a time and place. We cannot read scripture today without thinking of the land and the people who are in those lands. Today we meet Moses in Midian, which is, of course, in the Middle East. Midian is just a few hundred miles south of modern-day Gaza—a place where children are dying by the day and where Palestinian children are “forgotten by the world,” as Palestinian pastor Mitri Raheb says.

But here in Midian, God won’t let Moses forget the children who are dying in Egypt. Moses is being faced by a challenge and a call to go back to Egypt, a

place where a brutal king, Pharaoh, makes unilateral decisions to oppress and enslave people based on his own fear.

It feels appropriate to connect with Moses' calling to free his people from slavery just a few days after Juneteenth—the holiday that commemorates the total emancipation of enslaved Africans in America on June 19, 1865—which is not that long ago! It's a sobering reminder for us; that we, too, like the Egyptians enslaved God's beloved people.

Yes, sometimes we see ourselves in scripture through the sins of our past that keep repeating themselves. Liberation for all has been and continues to be an “evolving realization,”² as we continue to work for freedom, liberty, and justice for all in our country.

And so like Moses, we too, seek to keep evolving in this realization, to rise to the call of liberation even with our fears and even in times of fear.

Because remember, the very fact that Moses was alive to

have a call from God was a miracle in and of itself.

As you may recall from Exodus chapter 1, Pharaoh ordered every Hebrew boy killed. And not just killed, but drowned in the Nile River (Ex. 1:22).

This brutality was meant to decrease the Hebrew population. It was a secondary measure put in place *after* slavery. A few verses before his edict to kill Hebrew boys, Pharaoh said, and I quote, “*Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we [the Egyptians]. 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.*”

This type of rhetoric is the beginning of every effort of ethnic cleansing, by the way. Anytime we fear ‘another people’ being more numerous than ‘our people’—supremacist behaviors and practices ensue, controlling and subjugating behaviors that dehumanize and seek to erase and eradicate.

² Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr., “Statement from Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr., President of the Iliff School of Theology,” *From the Desk of the President* (June 2025).

Yes, we see ourselves in Scripture—all too clearly sometimes.

The story in Exodus continues, *“Therefore [Pharaoh] set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. 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. The Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them,”* (Ex. 1:9-14).

So it is into this context that Moses is born. And because of some brave women who risked their lives by refusing to comply with Pharaoh’s horrific orders, Moses was placed in a basket in the river which spared his life. Long story short, Moses was able to be nursed by his mother, but then raised by Pharaoh’s daughter. He was a Hebrew but living in Egypt and raised as an Egyptian. But as he grew older he began to pay attention and notice that the things around him didn’t look right or feel right. He saw the injustice.

As he grew up, he started to see and understand that his own people were the ones who were enslaved, and he was angry. When he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, he killed the Egyptian out of rage. Pharaoh found out and he then set out to kill Moses. Violence begets violence. That’s when Moses broke the cycle of violence and went on the run. He fled Pharaoh, left Egypt, and landed in Midian. He got married in Midian and had a son. Meanwhile, his people, the Hebrew people were still back in Egypt quote *“groaning under their slavery and crying out,”* (Ex. 2:23).

God heard their groaning and appeared to Moses in a burning bush. And that’s where our story picks up: with God calling Moses to liberate his people from slavery and oppression. This was a weighty call.

Moses *knew* that liberation needed to happen. He did not argue that. But he did doubt and question whether he was the one to do it. He’s afraid. The stakes are high. Really, they couldn’t be higher.

God is asking Moses to go back to Egypt—to go back to where

all of his people had either died or were still enslaved and to go back to the Very Place where there was a warrant out for his life!

No wonder Moses says “*No Thank You*” to God in five different ways.

But God persists. Meeting every excuse or rebuttal Moses has with a provision or a promise, a resource or a reminder.

Yes, the stakes are high. *And*, God still calls Moses.

We do not always get to decide when and where we are needed, or whether God’s plan for turning the course of history involves us or not. But sometimes turning the course of history, just means turning the course of our own lives...even just by 5-10 degrees. You don’t have to do a full 180 to make an effective change or to right a wrong or to move in the direction you hope to go or you hope for our country to go.

The key is to be listening for God. Always. God has a call for each of us.

Perhaps you’ve just retired and you’re trying to sort out what your passion and purpose will

be in this season of life where your paid professional work is no longer at the forefront of your identity. Perhaps you are a recent empty nester—you’re discerning the best ways to fill your time in this new season. Perhaps you were a caregiver, and the person you cared for has died. And after the deepest season of grieving, you are ready to move forward in a new direction. Or maybe you are trying to decide a course of study, a major, or discern a new job direction or opportunity. Some of you are discerning how to engage in justice work in this season when there are so many needs and so many ways you could use your gifts and you are not sure which way is the right way. You know you need to do something and you want to do something, but you don’t know what.

What decision are you mulling over right now? What opportunity are you weighing the pros and cons about? What change or action are you wondering about. Is God, your gut, or someone you trust, nudging you to consider something new? Something different?

Moses is scared and perhaps the choice or decision you have

ahead of you is scary too. That's okay. Maybe there's a lot at stake. There often is.

And if this is NOT you right now—if you aren't weighing a big decision right now, then enjoy this moment of rest, but know that your moment of call is coming. God is always on the lookout to use our gifts for the service of co-creating the kingdom. Each of us always has a call—big, small, and in between. Your life matters. How you use your gifts matters.

As we dive into this extended conversation between Moses and God, we'll see that like Moses, ***This is Us: Making Excuses for why We CAN'T yet This is Good News: God Equips Us so We CAN.***

In this first vignette, we see God telling Moses that he will be the one to go and free his people out of slavery. To which Moses replies, “*Who am I?*” Who am I to go and do this Big Thing you are asking me to do? *Why me?*

Moses' response, I imagine, is spoken from a place of Inadequacy and Self-Doubt.

He left Egypt a while ago. He has a whole life in Midian now. He doesn't have “liberation

experience” in terms of freeing people out of slavery. He doesn't even have first-hand experience as a slave. I also wonder if Moses might be dealing with ‘imposter syndrome’ too. Doubting his own abilities, skills, and achievements. After all, Moses has been considered “special” his whole life as the one saved in the basket in the Nile, and I imagine he wondered if people would see that he's really not that special. That he's not gifted or qualified in a special way, he just got lucky that day in the river. Other people saved him, but it wasn't because of HIS gifts. He didn't deserve this place of honor.

These are existential questions and very human wonderings. *Why me? Am I good enough?* Will people one day discover I'm really just a normal person and am not that good at what I do? Will people realize I actually do not know exactly what I'm doing, I'm just doing the next best thing I know how to do in the moment?

We all experience self-doubt. It's normal.

Yet God replies to Moses' Inadequacy and Self-Doubt with Presence and Vision.

First, promising God's presence saying, *"I will be with you."* God assures Moses he is not alone.

Second, God gives Moses a sign. But the sign is not something that will happen soon, it is a vision of the future. *"When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on THIS mountain, right where we are right now – Mt. Horeb."* God paints a picture for Moses of his future success. Showing him what life after the fact will look like.

When we experience self-doubt and inadequacy in our own lives, we would be good to remember these two gifts from God as well: Presence and Vision.

How can we remember that God is with us? Perhaps taking a few deep breaths and placing our hand on our heart or chest. Paying attention to the breath or life force within us. Perhaps imagining the presence of God enveloping us in love.

And then, as we are faced with a big decision or big opportunity or big calling or choice, when we feel inadequate for the task or when it feels impossible to us because it's so out of our

league, what would it be like to close our eyes and imagine what success looks like if we said "Yes" to the task or choice or calling or opportunity at hand?

Someone asks us to lead a ministry, but we aren't sure we have what it takes. Stop for a second. Close your eyes and imagine—what does a thriving ministry look like 1, 2 years down the road? Who is there with you making it happen? Draw it. Sketch it. Journal about it. Share about it with someone over coffee. Sometimes stopping to vision the future can help us see that it is possible, even before we know if we can take the first step.

A lot of advice out there will say take the first step, even if you can't see the whole stairwell—after all, that's what Faith is. But sometimes, perhaps God is inviting us to see the whole picture or at least a partial picture at the end of the journey and that can motivate us.

You get into the #1 college of your choice, but you don't know if you have what it takes to keep up with the classes and do the work? Well, imagine yourself at graduation, crossing the stage and being handed your diploma.

Or you get offered a promotion at work, but you don't know if you want to take it because it means more responsibility. Well, take a moment to imagine what that responsibility looks like on a day-to-day basis. What people are you managing or what boundaries are you putting in place to ensure healthy success?

Vision truly is a gift. And sometimes God has given us vision, but because we don't take the time to stop and think about what it would be like to say "Yes" to the big challenge; we just write it off immediately because it seems daunting. But perhaps there is a vision laying dormant in our imaginations, waiting for our "Yes" to shake it awake.

When you feel self-doubt, remember God's presence with you. You've got this because God's got you. When you feel you are inadequate, take a moment to vision. What if you actually were adequate? What does it look like if you said "Yes" to this this?

God is equipping Moses with tools that are as near to him as his breath (presence) and his imagination (vision).

Then in the second vignette. Moses says to God, *"what if I go and do what you say and I tell them 'the God of your ancestors sent me to you,'"* and they are like *"who is this God? What is his name? what am I supposed to say then?"*

This, in my mind, is the excuse or retort of Moses feeling a **lack of authority, or knowledge, or experience**. He is thinking about and focusing on what *other people* will think about him. Will they think he's qualified for this? (Anyone else ever think about what other people might think?)

Moses is wondering what "they" will say. If "they'll" believe him. He knows he's just one guy, so he's wondering about where his authority comes from and he's also anticipating a question he may not know how to answer—which speaks to his lack of experience or knowledge. He's never done this before and people may want to know things that he doesn't know how to answer, ask questions that he doesn't have a reply for.

God replies to Moses' **lack of authority, or knowledge, or experience** with ***"I AM who I AM" or "I WILL BE who I***

WILL BE.” I AM is the one sending you. God shuts down Moses’ fear of a lack of authority, experience, or knowledge by saying, “*I am God and you are not.*” Just by the fact that I am the one calling you and sending you on this journey—that is enough. It’s not only about who YOU are; it’s also about who I AM...and I will get you through this. I’m with you, and just mention the specific ancestors of Abraham, Isacc, and Jacob—and they’ll get it. That will give you credibility.

In other words, God is telling Moses that God will supply him with the knowledge/answers he needs while at the same time assuring Moses that he need not be worrying about having all the answers in advance because ultimately the liberation from slavery is God’s doing and God’s designs, not Moses’.

I find this helpful. When I am really feeling like I just don’t have the authority or experience or knowledge, I just remember that whatever I lack is fine. I am human. I am not meant to have all the knowledge or experience right now. I am learning. I just need to be faithful and do my best to remember that God’s authority is my grounding.

It’s difficult sometimes to trust that our authenticity and curiosity and earnestness is enough...that we don’t have to know everything or have all the experience to begin doing something new. But can you lean into curiosity and asking questions and seeking expertise and guidance from those around you? Can you name that as normal and just anticipate it as an expected part of the process? Can you see it as a strength, not a weakness?

There are so many things like this in our life. Just because we don’t have the knowledge or experience for something at the outset, that doesn’t mean God will not gift us with what we need to answer the calling and succeed. Trust me, I know.

If you would have told me five years ago, that I’d be standing before you today as one who now has knowledge about law suits, and depositions and roofing materials and insurance claims and Colorado and federal law and the ins and outs of claims and counter-claims...I would not have believed you. Nothing of this legal situation that I’m dealing with for Calvary has anything to do with

any area of skill or expertise that I had.

But you know what I did have? And do have? Love for this church and a calling from God to serve this church. And with that, God has equipped me through lots of studying and training and good lawyers and teams to be up to the task. I've gained the knowledge, and now, some experience too. It's never something I would have chosen. But I think I'm representing Calvary well and doing my best as a spiritual leader to stand strong morally and ethically in the midst of a system that often lacks those qualities.

I say this to say, I am living proof that you can NOT possess the authority of knowledge and previous experience when you first answer a call, allowing your passion for the call to fuel your learning because you know it needs to be done.

Trust yourself. Better yet, trust God. Get over your own fears or lack of skills and get started learning the skills you need. If it's not working, you'll discover it soon enough. Many of us have tried new things and in our failings of it not working, have further refined other gifts or a new direction.

Which leads us to the third push-back from Moses. This is what I like to call Moses spiraling on "What ifs." (My, my have I been here before!)

Moses pushes back on the whole I AM who I AM thing saying, "*But look, they may NOT believe me or listen to me but say, 'Pssh...The Lord didn't appear to you.'*" Moses is going down a rabbit hole of 'what ifs' at this point, but honestly, I can't blame him. People are people, and they probably will say, "*What are you talking about...the 'Lord appeared to you'yeah right!?*"

I love this moment in the conversation because God stops Moses' thought spiral in its tracks. Moses is all up in his head, and God knows that more "theoretical talk" about presence, vision, and "I am who I am," is not going to break Moses out of this fear-anxiety-head-tripping-cycle. So God gets real concrete with Moses. Pointing to his hand God says, "*What's that?*"

"*A staff,*" Moses says.

"*Yep,*" says God. "*Throw it on the ground.*"

Moses does and it becomes a snake and then God tells Moses to grab it and he does and it turns back to a staff.

Then as if that one sign is not enough, God equips Moses with another. Putting his hand in and out of his cloak, turning it from healthy to diseased and back to healthy again.

And then, as if two signs were not enough, God equips Moses with a third—pour water from the Nile on the ground and it will turn to blood.

To me, these very much feel like ‘magic tricks’—much more so than other miracles in the Bible—but I kind of think that’s part of the point. Like God is saying to Moses, *“Look, you’ve got to get out of your head and just trust me.”* God gives Moses some concrete actions he can do to stop people’s doubts in their tracks.

God doesn’t belittle Moses or tell him his spiraling ‘what ifs’ are stupid. God just gives Moses some tangible tools he can use to “prove” that God has called him to this task. God pulls Moses out of his head and points him toward action, toward taking the first step.

I don’t know about you, but whenever I begin to spiral on what-ifs, it really helps me to just tackle them and face them and say, “Okay, what if that happens? If it does, what will I do then? And then I play out the scenarios. If this person says this, then I will say this. If this person reacts in this way, then I will receive that reaction in this way and react in a different way.

These scenarios become hands on tools for how to deal with different things that could come up.

Or another way to think about it is this: if you are going camping and someone in your camping group is spiraling on getting attacked by a bear or having an injury, perhaps you bring some things like bear spray and first aid kits. You may or may not need them, but you feel more equipped having them if the challenge arises.

I feel like this is how God is equipping Moses in this third vignette. **In response to his spiraling on “What Ifs,” God gives Moses tactical responses and resources to use so he can feel confident in what he might face.** God wants Moses to feel secure in what he might

face. God brings Moses into the practical and into the resourceful, when Moses is spiraling down into the hypothetical.

Then we get to the **fourth rebuttal of Moses**, which is really the first true “excuse” if you ask me: *“But God, I am not eloquent—never have been and never will be. I’m slow of speech and tongue”—*which is all another way of saying, *“I can’t lead, I don’t like public speaking, and I don’t even make any sense when I speak. I get really nervous. I stutter. I mix up my words, and so on and so forth.”*

This feels very familiar to me. When my mentor mentioned that God might be calling me to the ministry, one of my first replies back was, *“But I’m shy; I’m an introvert. I don’t like being in front of people or interacting with a lot of people, and I certainly am not any good at speaking in front of people.”* I figured pastors and preachers had to be great public speakers and extroverted and naturally charismatic. My mentor said, smiling, *“Anne, I’m introvert too.”* And I was like, *“Really? But you stand up in the pulpit every Sunday so confident and preach?”* And he said, *“yeah, I*

‘flip the switch’ on Sundays. And I go home and crash later to restore my energy.”

I totally understand what he means now. My desire to not speak in public did not prevent me from answering the call to ministry, but I still get nervous. Every single Sunday. There is something that will always be vulnerable about standing in front of people and sharing one’s thoughts—because they are received in all kinds of different ways. You almost have to ‘let go’ of the response, and trust that God is using you in the delivery.

In any case, I think this is the very thing that Moses is speaking too—*And* he very well may have had a speaking impediment too.

To Moses’ excuse of “my gifts don’t meet this need” God replies with “I will equip and train you.” God reminds Moses that God is the one who created him, and as his creator, God will be the mouth of Moses and will teach him exactly what he is to say.

I feel like this is something we all need to hear these days. There are so many needs in our world. So many opportunities to

serve and be of use. It can be hard to find what we might consider to be our ‘exact niche.’ And it is true, we want something to align with our gifts. But nothing is ever going to be perfect, and sometimes you just have to do something because it needs to be done, not because you are perfectly gifted to do it. But God will grow you into giftedness.

Many of you have become caregivers for those you love—a parent, a partner, a child. You didn’t do this because you had the skills in advance, you did it because you love the person and then learned on the job. Now you find yourself tracking meds, giving injections, helping with baths and toileting, being an advocate at medical appointments, navigating insurance claims. No one has taught you this. You did not have these skills before but you learned on the job how to care for one who needed your care. This is the essence of parenting, right? There is no manual or course in advance. You are equipped and trained, day by day, on the job. You learn as you go. In the *moment*.

I think deep down Moses knows this is true, too. He MUST KNOW deep down that yes,

God will actually equip him with the very gift and skill he doesn’t think he has, because at this point he reverts to a final plea.

In the fifth exchange, Moses flat out says to God, “*Please God, just send Someone Else. (capital SE).*”

Whenever we say, “surely Someone Else will do this,” *ooo-wee!* That’s when we know we’re in trouble! That means we are getting close to probably having to answer this call ourselves. At that point, we are acknowledging this call is important and someone *needs* to answer it. This ‘thing’ needs to be done. Otherwise, we wouldn’t care if Someone Else steps forward or not. We’d just let it go and think, ‘well if it doesn’t get done, it doesn’t get done.’

But Moses knows. He *knows* his people need to be liberated. He is just scared, and rightly so. Even after the gifts of God’s Presence and Vision, God’s Authority, God’s hands-on, practical/tangible signs and proofs, and even after God saying God would give Moses the speech therapy he needs and tell him exactly what to say, even after God provides for

every need or lack that Moses raises—Moses still says “*Someone Else please.*” He is so close to knowing he’s the one to do this, that he wants to try one last time to see if Someone Else will step forward because if Someone Else steps forward, he doesn’t have to keep thinking about it. If Someone Else steps forward then the Someone Else makes the decision for him.

God has been patient with Moses through four excuses and rebuttals and God has been generous with all these gifts and yet still Moses wants God to send Someone Else? God is angry, the narrator says. Anger is often the outward expression of internal hurt or sadness:

“Does Moses not trust me? I mean, I know he doesn’t trust himself, but why doesn’t he trust me?”

So with God’s great grace and love, God meets Moses’ plea for Someone Else with a gift of a Co-Leader, a Companion.

God says, *“I will send with you a co-lead, a companion. Make no mistake, I’m not letting you off the hook, you’re still going, but you won’t go alone. I’ll send your brother with you and he can do all the talking. I’ll talk to you, you’ll talk to Aaron, and Aaron will talk to the people.*

It’s not the most efficient way to do things, but whatever, we’ll make it work.”

We here at Calvary know the gift of ‘co-leaders,’ which is why all of our deacon roles are co-leadership positions and many ministry teams are too. We recognize the weight of leadership is difficult for one person to carry alone, and so we equip you with a partner, a co-lead to share the load. And that is what God wants for us, always.

Even when God gives us a specific calling, God always gives us people around us to support us and uphold us and encourage us and to fill in our gaps or lacks.

This “Someone Else will do it” excuse is truly one that looms large in our lives. But I’ll say it one more time: If you are aware of this need and are thinking about it enough to be doing the mental gymnastics about why it’s okay for you to sit this one out or take a break or wait for someone else to do it—it could be a sign that THIS is the Very Thing that God might need you to do, or be calling you to try. Not because it’s never good to rest or because you don’t deserve a break. Of course

taking breaks and resting is good. But usually if you are going over something in your head more than once or twice, it's a sign that maybe you are not supposed to leave behind that thought or idea so quickly. God nudges through consistent thought patterns and questions!

Throughout this whole exchange, all of Moses' rebuttals and questions and excuses are met with the gifts of God: Gifts of Presence & Vision, Gifts of Authority beyond ourselves, Gifts of Tangible Signs and Resources, Gifts of Training and Equipping, and Gifts of Co-leadership and Companionship. *It's an abundance of support.*

Can we trust that what is true for Moses, is true for us as well?

We live in a world that needs our "YES"es right now—in a big way. And we each need to discern what that YES is. Like Moses, we know that full liberation is not yet realized in our world. And our "YES" does not mean we solve *EVERY*thing. It just means we are faithful with *Our Thing*, the Thing God uniquely needs us to do, whatever It is.

Remember how Moses' story ends? He answer the call. He goes to Egypt. He liberates his people from slavery; they cross the Red Sea. And then they wander in the wilderness 40 years and complain. It is not a perfect journey and Moses DOESN'T even get to see the Promised Land himself. He dies looking out over that land, remembering the vision entrusting it to Someone Else. There is a time for Someone Else. But not in place of Our Time. It is the way life God works through all of us collectively; we do our part for one leg of the journey, and *then* we pass the torch to Someone Else.

Let's not miss our chance to carry the torch, to run our leg of the race. Because **the Good News is that God meets our "No, I can't" with "Yes you can, because I AM who I AM."**

And who can argue with that?

Amen.