SERMON NOTES

Lessons from the Burning Bush

A Month of Purpose · Part 2 of 4

Exodus 2:11–14 · Exodus 3:1–4:17 · Exodus 1:11–14 · Genesis 46:34
Deuteronomy 28:12 · Romans 12:6 · 1 Peter 4:10

BIG IDEA

God has already placed three things in you: a fire that makes you come alive, a strength that feels ordinary to you but extraordinary to others, and an ache you can't walk past. This week we name all three, straight from Moses' own call story.

The full outline for this message, scripture first: The Text, What It Means, The Challenge and Closing. Adapt it freely and add your own stories.

01 The Text

EXODUS 2:11, 14

"One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were..." A Hebrew he tries to help turns on him: "Who made you a prince and a judge over us?"

EXODUS 3:2–4

Moses sees a bush "burning, yet it was not consumed," and turns aside to look. God calls to him from within it: "Moses, Moses!"

EXODUS 4:2 · GENESIS 46:34

"The LORD said to him, 'What is that in your hand?' He said, 'A staff.'" (In Egypt, shepherds were considered "an abomination," the lowest of trades.)

EXODUS 3:7 · EXODUS 1:11–14 · EXODUS 6:9

"I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out." Egypt "worked the people of Israel ruthlessly," making their lives "bitter with hard service," a people so worn down by "their broken spirit and harsh slavery" they could barely receive the news of rescue.

DEUTERONOMY 28:12 · ROMANS 12:6 · 1 PETER 4:10

"The LORD will open to you his good treasury... and bless all the work of your hands." "We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us." "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another."

02 What It Means

Before there's a bush, there's a fracture. Moses grows up with the privileges of Pharaoh's palace and the blood of a Hebrew slave, belonging fully to neither. When he tries to intervene for his own people, they reject him: "who made you a prince and a judge over us?" That rejection is what sends him into forty years of obscurity in Midian. It's also what forms him. Burden is rarely born in comfort; it's usually born in exactly this kind of fracture.

Then comes the fire. Moses meets God at a bush that burns but is not consumed, the shape of true passion. It energizes without destroying you; it lights you up without burning you out. Then God asks a strange question: not for an army, not for political power, just "what is that in your hand?" Moses answers with the obvious: a shepherd's staff, the tool of a trade Egyptians considered "an abomination." That despised, ordinary staff goes on to part a sea and confront an empire. Your gift works the same way: it hides in plain sight, feeling completely ordinary to you and remarkable to everyone watching, which is exactly what "the work of your hands" means in Deuteronomy 28:12 and 1 Peter 4:10, gifts given to be used, not hidden.

And then the burden, named plainly: "I have heard them crying out." Exodus 1 spells out what that cry sounds like: real people worked without mercy, and by Exodus 6:9, so broken they can barely receive good news when it finally comes. A burden isn't stress or outrage. It's the specific place where God's heart meets yours and won't let you look away.

03 The Challenge

Challenge: Give the room a minute of quiet to jot down one honest line for each: what makes me come alive (Passion), what feels natural to me but wows others (Gift), and what breaks my heart that I can't walk past (Burden). Don't rush to combine them. That's next week.

Encouragement: All three are already in you, the way they were already in Moses long before the bush. Naming them isn't inventing something new; it's finally paying attention to what's been there all along.

04 Closing

> **Closing prayer:** Thank God for the fire, the strength, and the ache He has already placed in every person in the room. Ask for the courage to name them honestly instead of downplaying them.

FOR YOUR GROUPS

Groups: the Part 2 group guide works through questions for all three circles. Bulletin outline and quote graphics are on the Part 2 page.

Every Part 2 resource: monthofpurpose.benjaminwindle.com/part-2