

Written Copy: The Good News of the God Who Reveals Himself to Us

Midweek Lent #1

Wednesday, February 25th, 2026

Text: Exodus 3:11-14

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" ¹² He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Exegetical Statement

The LORD God comes to call Moses to be a part of His plan to rescue the Children of Israel from oppression and slavery in Egypt. He comes to meet Moses on Mt. Horeb, (Mt. Sinai), the mountain of God, appearing in a supernatural display: a bush on fire that is not being consumed. When Moses stops to check it out, the Messenger (Angel) of the LORD calls to Him to stay where He is, and take off his sandals, because this is now holy ground. He introduces Himself as the God of Moses' father and the Patriarchs who has heard Israel's cry, seen their affliction, and has come to rescue them out of Egypt and lead them to a pleasant and spacious land that is now occupied by other nations, but He will give to them. Therefore, Moses is to go and be the LORD's shepherd to lead His people out of Egypt, going to Pharaoh to demand their release. Moses balks at this, questioning the LORD's choosing him for this task. The LORD assures him that He will be with Him in this work. The sign that he is the man will be when they come to this mountain to worship the LORD. Then Moses raises another issue, who should he tell the people of Israel has sent him? God responds "I AM WHO I AM" [literally "I WILL BE WHOMEVER I WILL BE"], that is who has sent Moses to them: the God of the Patriarchs who shall be known and remembered as such from generation to generation.

Focus Statement:

When we confess who we are outside of faith then we can know who this God is that comes to call us into faith. He is the LORD in whom all things find their source, their existence, who is over all things for eternity. We are unworthy of His attention and help, yet He comes and answers our cries in our affliction and slavery to sin to rescue us and claim us as His own. He came to do this as Jesus Christ, who is God Himself, the only one who can set us free from this slavery and lead us through this fallen world unto eternal life.

Function Statement:

Why it's important to know:

To know who God is to us we must first confess who we are to Him, slaves to sin who cannot free ourselves, unworthy to be His children.

What the hearer should do as a result:

We know God through Jesus Christ our Savior by faith now as given and strengthened in Word and Sacraments. But we will know Him in all His glory in the Resurrection.

Subject Sentence: In Jesus Christ God Reveals Himself to Be Our Rescue

Introduction: Who Is Calling Me?

The phone rings, and you wonder if you should answer it. It's a legitimate concern in this day and age because of all the scammers there are today. And they have become increasingly sophisticated. They gain access to who you are, and even seem to know some of the needs you have and situations you are in. I heard the story of someone who received a call from a person pretending to be from the police. They said they had arrested the person's daughter for a DUI and they were holding her pending arraignment. They said they were placing this call on behalf of their daughter who was asking them to post bail money. They needed to do this right away, over the phone, by giving them their credit card number, or she would remain in jail.

The parents were shocked and very concerned. It all seemed very legitimate. This caller knew the name of their daughter, and the city she lived in, along with her cell phone number, which they said she was not able to use in jail. They gave this person their credit card number. I don't recall the amount they asked for but it was sizable. Then the person said that her car had been impounded and that to release it they had to pay even more money, twice as much as the bail amount. Once again, at first blush it seemed legitimate, since the caller knew the make and model of the car she drove.

But this was a lot of money. At this point something seemed fishy about the whole thing. The couple told the caller that they needed to move some money around in order to pay the fine and asked them to call back. Instead, they called their daughter, who was not in jail, whose car was not impounded. She was at work. It was all a scam. They were able to call their bank, cancel that credit card, and prevent the scammer from getting anything more out of them.

It used to be that Caller ID helped weed out such calls. But these scammers now have the ability to change the number that shows up on the Caller ID to make it seem that the area code is correct, even at times to make it seem as if it's a legitimate call from someone you know. We need to make sure that the person calling us is really who they claim to so that we don't get scammed.

Who God Reveals Himself to Be to Moses

When the LORD comes to Moses to call him into service as His agent to rescue the Children of Israel, Moses is concerned that they will see him as a scam artist. It's a legitimate concern given who Moses is when God comes to him. He himself doesn't think he is the right guy for this job.

Who is Moses? He used to be someone who lived in the community of Israel in Egypt. He used to live like an Egyptian prince in Pharaoh's palace. But when he stepped in to stop an Egyptian who was beating one of his fellow Israelites, he ended up killing the Egyptian slave driver. Moses was hoping word wouldn't get around, but it did, at least among his fellow countrymen, and that wasn't a good thing. The next day, when he tried to intercede between two fellow Israelites who were fighting, one of them shot back, "Who are you to judge us? Are you going to kill like you did that Egyptian?" Out of fear Moses ran away.

Who is he now? He is a man who no longer has a home or a people of his own, but lives with the Midianites. He is a shepherd, but even the flock he tends is not his own, it belongs to his father-in-law. Moses sees himself as a failure, not worthy or capable of the task he is being told to take on.

Yet it is to this man that the LORD comes. He appears to Moses in an incredible supernatural way, from a bush that is burning yet not being consumed. Our text says it's "The Angel of the LORD", (note "the" and not "an Angel of the LORD"). This angel tells Moses not to come any closer and declares the ground on which Moses stands to be holy. That's because this is the LORD God Himself, cloaked in the burning bush, appearing to Moses. Angel means "Messenger". This is God the Son who in 1400 years would return as the WORD made flesh. He is the God who has come to call Moses into service as part of His plan to rescue the Children of Israel.

If someone had come to you and told you God had called to them from a burning bush to be the one who was to rescue you out of all your troubles, someone who ran away from your community in disgrace and had been gone for 40 years, would you believe them? Moses has a legitimate concern here.

Exodus 3:13-14 ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

What kind of answer is that from the LORD, "I AM WHO I AM"? What does that mean? It sounds like circular logic. Another way to translate this from the Hebrew is "I WILL BE WHOEVER I WILL BE". What is the LORD really revealing about who He is? He is saying ***"Look at who I've revealed Myself to be in the past to the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob along with what I've promised them. I'm the God who called them to faith, cared for them and protected them, who prospered them. I am the God who told Abraham that his descendants would wind up slaves in Egypt for 400 years, but that I would rescue them out of slavery."***

I AM the God who from whom all things have their being. I AM the One and Only God who rules over all things and all people. I claim the nation of Israel to be my children, even though they don't deserve it. And I claim and call you to be my representative to Pharaoh and to my people, even though you are not worthy of that, even though you by yourself are incapable of doing that. I will be with you; I will empower you; and by my hand you will be successful.

Exodus 3:12 He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

What kind of sign is this that the LORD gives to Moses? It's a sign that's not going to be fulfilled until after the fact, until after Moses has gone to Pharaoh and successfully led the Children of Israel out, rescuing them from slavery. It's a sign that in and of itself Moses must accept and hold on to by faith. It's the same kind of faith he will need to go and do what the LORD commands of him, a faith that can only come from God Himself.

"I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE". That is the LORD saying I will reveal Myself to you through the promises I make and fulfill. Promises that only I can keep. Through these I will reveal to you who I am.

Who Jesus Reveals Himself to Be

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

Who is Jesus revealing Himself to be in our Gospel Lesson? He is claiming to be the very One who came to Moses in the burning bush and called Him into ministry. He is the very One who came to Abraham and told him that his descendants would be enslaved for 400 years, but He would rescue them and kept that promise. He is the One who as God the Son existed before Abraham was ever born, and before anything else existed.

"HE WILL BE WHO HE WILL BE". He will not be the Messiah these Jews want Him to be, or even the One His disciples want Him to be. He is God the Son who was sent by the Father to be the Rescuer of Mankind from slavery to sin.

Why can't these Jews understand that? In His arguing with them prior to the start of our Gospel Lesson Jesus has already told them why, they are not children of Abraham as they claim to be. Their father is the devil, the father of lies. As such they refuse the gift of faith that Jesus' words and witness have to give them, and because of that they cannot know Him or God the Father as Jesus is revealing them to these Jews.

Who Is This “I AM WHO I AM” to You?

Who is this “**I AM WHO I AM**” to you? This God is far beyond our ability to understand, to comprehend, to believe in. We best know Him and believe in Him through God the Son who joined Himself to humanity as Jesus of Nazareth.

Who has He shown Himself to be to you? To know and hold fast to that we must first see and acknowledge who we really are before Him. We are those who are enslaved to sin, those who can in no way, by no amount of effort or good works free ourselves from our sinful condition. We are hopelessly lost without Him.

But He has come to you and revealed to you who God is for you. He is the God who came to earth and became one of us so that He might become our sacrifice for sin. He came so that by becoming our sin on the cross He became the Savior of all mankind. He is the One who came to rescue every single person that ever lived from their slavery to sin.

He is the God who has come to you and revealed Himself to you as the One who loved you so much He couldn't bear the thought of losing you for eternity. He comes and reveals Himself to you as your Savior, your rescuer from slavery to sin, death, and the devil through His Word and Sacraments. Through those means He has presented Himself and His atoning sacrifice as being “for you” and given you the power to hold on to that by faith, His gift through the Gospel Message.

He continues to come through His Word to impress upon you and me who we really are without Him, lost in our sin and apart from Him now and forever. He comes to reveal who you are in Him: God's precious children whom He came to rescue, to save, and to make His own now and forever.

Conclusion

There are other people who may tell you about a god who excuses sins and sinful lifestyles as being okay. Or that God is actually known by other names and other religions, and that all roads lead to God. They are worse than scammers. Do not listen to them.

Instead listen to and hold fast to **I AM WHO I AM** as He has revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ to you by faith. Listen and hold fast to who He declares you to be, a poor miserable sinner who has been rescued from slavery to sin, death, and the devil through His life, death, and resurrection. He declares you to be in right standing with God by faith in Him. And He is equipping you just as He did Moses to do a task that may seem impossible to you, to share your faith in Him and who He is with others. For the **GREAT I AM**, nothing is impossible.