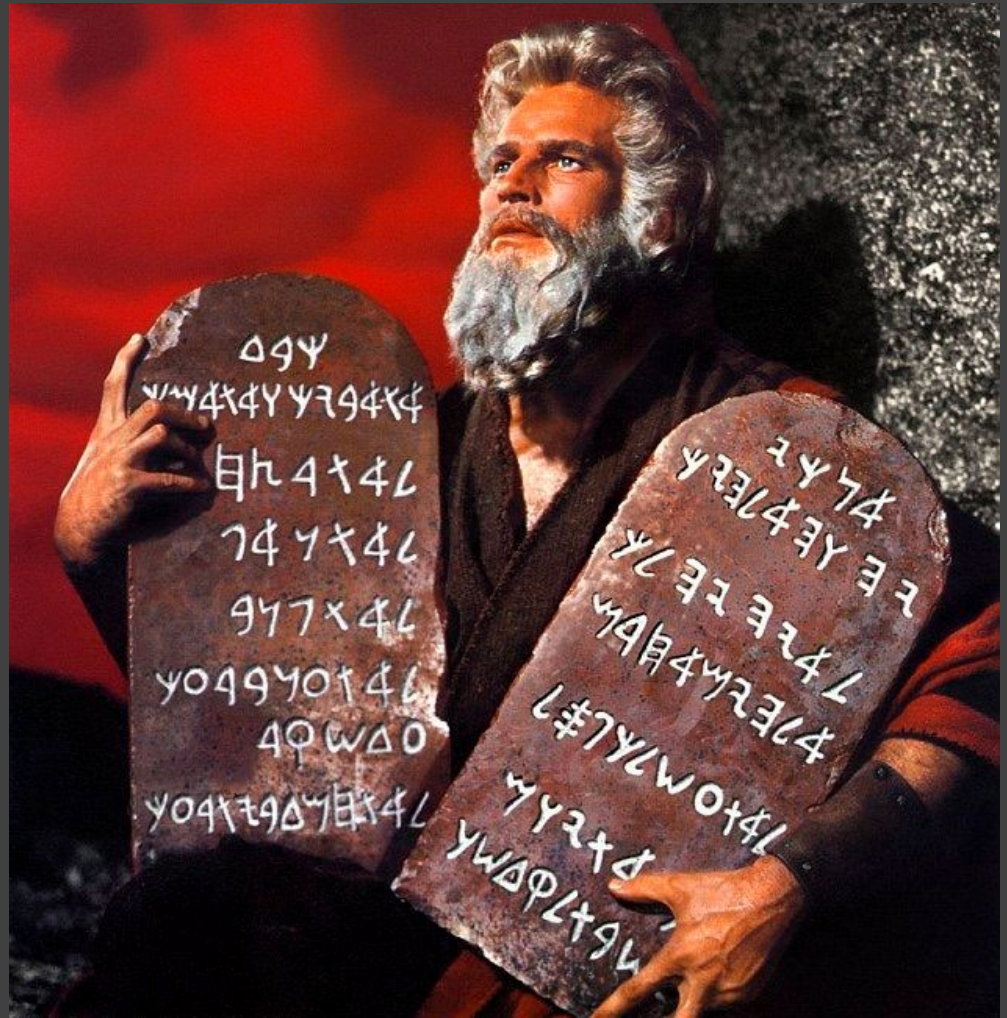


No Little
People, No
Little
Places—
Moses



EXODUS 4:1-5, 20

¹ Then Moses answered, “But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you.’ ” ² The LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” ³ And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. ⁴ But the LORD said to Moses, “Put out your hand and catch it by the tail”—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand— ⁵ “that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” . . .

²⁰ So Moses took his wife and his sons and had them ride on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

- Among the great heroes of faith in the Old Testament, Moses towers over them all.
- He **prevailed against the most powerful king and empire** in the ancient world to deliver the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- He **received their divine constitution** directly from the hand of God on tablets of stone at Mount Sinai.
- He **oversaw the birth of a nation** and the institutions that would form its worship, government, and culture for more than a thousand years.
- For **forty years** he led the people of God in the crucial early days of their national life.
- He penned the **first five books of the Bible** and became so identified them that they came to be called “the *Law of Moses*.”
- As to his personal faith and character, no other human ever lived in such close proximity to God.
- **But Moses was called to leadership from *humble and inauspicious circumstances*.**

The world's idea of greatness focuses on power, wealth, and fame.



- Sometimes that mentality carries over into the church.
- People believe that because they are not the *smartest, ablest, or richest*, that they could not be used in any significant way for God or the work of His church.

But again and again, the Bible teaches us
that . . .

There are no nobody's in God's church.

1. Jesus taught his followers a different idea of greatness.

Mark 10:41-45

⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. ⁴² And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

2. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

- In the Corinthians church *wisdom, influence, and high breeding* were in *short supply*.
- If God had chosen on the world's standards of greatness, He would have passed them by.



- But God turned the world's standards upside down and chose the ordinary rather than the outstanding to be his people and do his work.

Every believer holds a special position in God's kingdom.

1 Corinthians 12:20-26

²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Your unglamorous colon.

- I have some pictures of my **colon** from a colonoscopy I had done a couple of years back. But I **don't** carry them around in my **wallet** and you won't see them posted on my **Facebook** page.
- You don't want to see pictures of my colon and I sure don't want to see any pictures of yours.
- It's **not** one of those **glamorous** parts of the body. It's one of those "**unpresentable parts**" as Paul puts it.





Your colon may ***not*** be very ***pretty***, but let your colon stop working and the rest of you will quickly come to a ***complete stop***.

- No one ever thinks about it, but every beauty queen who wins the **Miss America** contest is up there on the stage at least in part because she has a colon that works.
- You often hear the winners say things like: *“I’d like to thank my mom and dad for their love and support, my voice coach who taught me to sing, and my third grade teacher who believed in me.”*
- But you’ve never heard one of them ever say, *“I’m really grateful that my colon is on the job tonight.”*

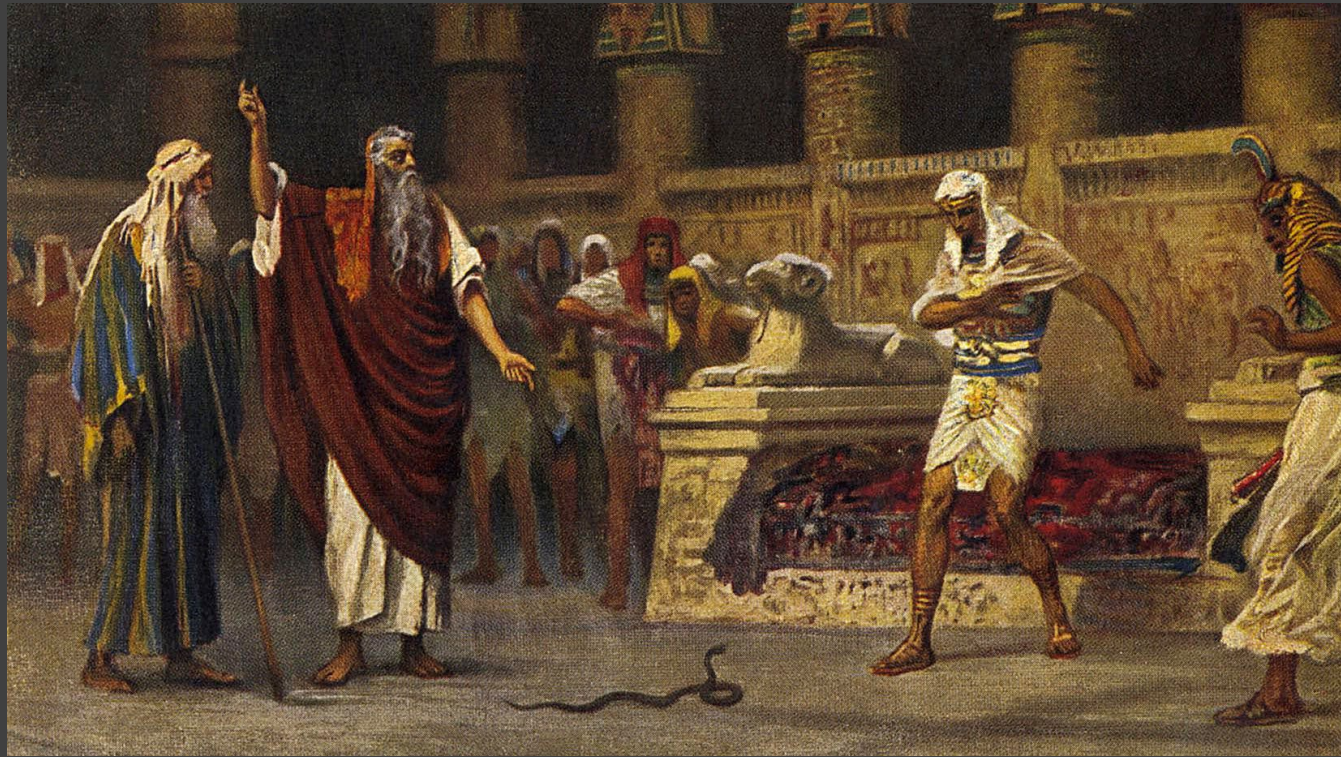


- No one ever *mentions* their colon. But you can't function unless your colon is doing its job.
- Not every job in the church is glamorous.
- Not every job is done in the spotlight.
- Not every job is pleasant.
- Some are *quiet, hard, dirty* tasks that are done *behind the scenes*.
- But every job is important and every person is important.

3. Excuses don't work with a God who can use anyone or anything to do his work.

God can even use a stick of wood if he chooses.





The Lord used **Moses' staff** as a miraculous sign that he was God's chosen leader for Israel.



God forced Egypt to let his people go by unveiling his power in the Ten Plagues.

Half of those plagues on Egypt were initiated by the **staff** of Moses.

- The **Nile** River was turned to **blood**.
- **Frogs** covered the land.
- Then swarms of **gnats**. After this 3rd plague, Pharaoh's magicians exclaimed, *"This is the finger of God!"*
- Then **flies** covered the land.
- Followed by a **plague** on all the **cattle**.
- Then all the Egyptians and their livestock were covered with painful **boils**. At this point the Book of Exodus declares that *Pharaoh's magicians could not stand before Moses*.
- 3 days of **darkness** followed the **hail**, which followed the **swarms of locust**.
- Finally, when Pharaoh still refused to set the Israelites free, came the last plagues: the **death** of the firstborn in every Egyptian household.



With nothing more than a staff in his hand, Moses humbled the most powerful nation on earth.

- Moses saw God *save* the Israelites from the Egyptian army at the *Red Sea*.
- God *parted* the Red Sea and Israel crossed on a dry sea bed. Pharaoh pursued the Israelites with 600 chariots. But . . .

Exodus 14:13-14.

“Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

- When the Egyptians followed, they were *drowned* as God closed the waters back upon them.



- The staff provided **water** for over 3 million Israelites in the desert at Rephidim.
- The staff was God's instrument of **military victory** over the Amalekites.



How were all
these miraculous
works done with
a stick of wood?

Exodus 4:20

. . . And Moses
took the staff of
God in his hand.



The staff of Moses had
become the staff of God.

- No matter how *weak* or *limited* you may be, you're *more than a stick of wood*!
- No one ever really knows just how important some small job is the key to something great happening or not happening.





- Go does great things with little people.
- He took a ragged band of *slaves* who had been exiled in Egypt for 430 years and forged them into a *world power*.

- He took a *shepherd boy* from Bethlehem—the *youngest* of his brothers—and made him the *champion* of Israel over the Philistine giant Goliath, then later made him the *greatest king* Israel ever had.





- He took a *humble girl* from *Nazareth* and made her the *mother* of the *Savior of the world*.

- He took a group of *ignorant* and *unlearned fishermen* from the docks in Galilee and turned them into *ambassadors* for the *kingdom* of God, whose preaching *turned the world upside down*.



Conclusion

No matter who you are, you are *important* to God. He can and will use you to do great things in His world.

1 Peter 2:9-10

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.



