

A Strange Calling and a Faithful God

“May the God of peace...equip you with everything good for doing His will” Hebrews 13:20-21

As a young child I enjoyed being in front of people. I was eager to audition for speaking parts in a school play or to volunteer to speak at church. I even remember in second grade wearing a coat and tie to school for “show and tell” and bringing my Bible to preach to my class when it was my turn (I’m sure they really enjoyed that!).

It has been said many times that the number one fear of Americans is public speaking...even more than death. When I was a child, that fear made no sense to me. I enjoyed sharing my story with an audience. My father, who is a musician, was always on stage and it did not seem to be a frightening thing.

Then, it happened. I was in the seventh grade and giving a speech in front of the student body. I had no nerves whatsoever and was looking forward to it. Yet, in the middle of my speech, my throat got tight, my eyes watered and for the first time in my life I understood why people had rather die than speak in front of a crowd. I had no idea what had just happened to me.

That problem would bother me, in fact, torment me for a number of years. Perhaps the greatest example of how bad it was came my freshman year in college. I was in a mandatory speech class. My first speech had to be two minutes long and could be on any topic. What should have been no big deal brought me huge stress. The night before my speech I got in my car and drove for about two hours with my radio up loud while I was singing and screaming hoping to lose my voice. I woke up the next morning with my voice still working, but with a very sore throat.

Then, something really strange happened. The Lord put a call on my life to surrender to preach. I had always loved the church and enjoyed preaching (remember second grade show and tell?). But, how does a young man who dreads the thought of speaking for two minutes in front of a small group, surrender his life to preach week after week?

I knew I should not run from God. I read the Bible each day and I loved the Lord and wanted to honor Him with my life. I just did not understand how I could be effective and do any good for His glory. I knew I did not have the talent, strength or skills necessary to be a teacher of God’s Word.

Then, it hit me. God has not called me in spite of my weakness, He has called me BECAUSE of my weakness. He was going to show His power through my lack and the *God of peace was going to equip me with everything good for doing His will* (just as His Word promised). God was not looking for the most eloquent or the most talented. The Lord was not seeking to call the most knowledgeable, gifted or powerful. Instead, God was finding a weak, scared and fragile person to prove that true power comes not from what we have, but from what He pours into us.

I now preach three times every single Sunday. From time to time someone will come up to me and say something like, “Good message this morning” or “You are a good speaker.” I thank them for their kind words, thank the Lord for the encouragement and smile. This guy who once

had rather be sick than have to give a speech remembers that God's Word is true. The Lord will indeed give us what we need. He may not give you everything you want, He may not give you the same things He gives someone else, but He will be faithful to give you everything you need for doing His will. Trust the Lord, follow Him and let God use your life to bring Him glory.

Pastor Michael Staton
First Baptist Church of Mustang

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