



Have You Seen A Burning Bush? Supplementary Materials

[There are no supplementary materials needed for Session 1 : Debunking Vocation]

SESSION 2 : DISCERNING VOCATION

Reading

Moses and the Burning Bush - Exodus 3 - 4:17 (NRSV)

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'

The Divine Name Revealed

But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "I am has sent me to you."' God also said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you": This is my name for ever, and this my title for all generations. Go and assemble the elders of Israel, and say to them, "The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying: I have given heed to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt.

I declare that I will bring you up out of the misery of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey." They will listen to your voice; and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, "The

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Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; let us now go a three days' journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." I know, however, that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will perform in it; after that he will let you go. I will bring this people into such favour with the Egyptians that, when you go, you will not go empty-handed; each woman shall ask her neighbour and any woman living in the neighbour's house for jewellery of silver and of gold, and clothing, and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters; and so you shall plunder the Egyptians.'

Moses' Miraculous Power

Then Moses answered, 'But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, "The Lord did not appear to you." ' The Lord said to him, 'What is that in your hand?' He said, 'A staff.' And he said, 'Throw it on the ground.' So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses drew back from it. Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail'—so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand— 'so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.'

Again, the Lord said to him, 'Put your hand inside your cloak.' He put his hand into his cloak; and when he took it out, his hand was leprous, as white as snow. Then God said, 'Put your hand back into your cloak'—so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body— 'If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign. If they will not believe even these two signs or heed you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.'

But Moses said to the Lord, 'O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' Then the Lord said to him, 'Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.' But he said, 'O my Lord, please send someone else.' Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, 'What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.'

SESSION 3 : MY STORY

Life Line Exercise This exercise is essential as preparation for 'My Story' (Topic VOC3)

It is important that we see the story of our lives as something dynamic which is still unfolding. We are always work in progress, journeying on with and into God. How we tell our story and how it might develop in the future is central to exploring our vocation.

This exercise helps us to stand back and see our life story to date and appreciate it for what it is.

In thinking about our vocation, it can be helpful to recognise that all of our past experiences can be relevant and have a place in our story. We may not at the time know just how God might just make sense and meaning of our past. In God's eyes nothing is wasted.

Draw your lifeline

1. Take a large sheet of paper. Draw a straight line across the middle of it along the longest axis.
2. Write down the main / significant events of your life in chronological order. You may find it best to list them before you start writing along the line.
3. Now using the lower half of the paper, write single words or phrases that describe your feelings about the various events in your life, putting the high spots higher and the low spots lower as your feelings about them seem to require. If you going to share this lifeline, only include items that you are happy to talk about.
4. When you have finished writing them down, join them up with a line.
5. Then using the top half of the paper, jot down in a similar way your feelings about God at different points. Join these up with a line.
6. You may want to add in any special events that did not find a place in the centre line

You may find this exercise brings back painful memories as well as happy or pleasant ones. It is not the aim of this exercise to dwell on past event but rather to see the pattern of our story and how that relates to our experience of God in our lives.

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SESSION 4 : LOOKING INWARDS – EXERCISE: ‘PARTY TIME’

What kind of people attract you most?

The RIASEC Theory, by John L. Holland, cited by Richard Bolles in ‘What Color is Your Parachute?’ (Ten Speed Press, 1993)

Imagine you have been invited to 6 different parties all at the same time.

Each of the parties has a particular group of people at them.
You can only go to 3 of the parties so pick the top 3 that you think has people who you might get on best with and find most interesting.

Put the letter of your choice in the 3 boxes below in order of preference.



R

REALISTIC:

People interested in practical projects, building, fixing things, making things, machinery, tools, sports, outdoor pursuits, wildlife

A

ARTISTIC:

People interested in the arts, music, unconventional or unstructured thinking, creative expression, intuition, innovation

C

CONVENTIONAL:

People interested in processes, systems, statistics, numbers, accounts, quality control

E

ENTERPRISING:

People interested in working through others, initiating new projects, influencing, managing projects, making new things happen, inspiring others to

I

INVESTIGATIVE:

People interested in science, history, researching, analysing, studying things in depth, information technology, collecting

S

SOCIAL:

People interested in other people, listening, counselling, nurturing, healing, caring for others, teaching, helping others

Put your first, second and third choice party letter in these boxes

1

2

3

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Which words describe you best?

Write your 3-letter Code from the “Party Exercise” here:

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Now look at the boxes below which match your letters. Tick the words that best fit you and who you are. Try to be selective. Feel free to add any words to the lists.

Realistic	Investigative	Artistic
Making Producing Building Realising Moving Constructing Fixing / Repairing Securing Offering Repairing Maintaining Being hospitable	Analysing Considering Investigating Exploring Hunting Searching Observing Solving Digging down Collecting Finding Studying Researching Administering	Creating Harmonising Enhancing Reframing Imagining Expressing Innovating Generating Dreaming Designing Inventing Renewing Performing Transforming
Social	Enterprising	Conventional
Relating Understanding Communicating Caring Serving Encouraging Bridge building Collaborating Enabling Nurturing Developing Reconciling Facilitating Healing Teaching Listening Sharing	Influencing Stimulating Stirring Projecting Shaping Stimulating Engaging Opening Initiating Inspiring Changing Realising Growing Challenging	Structuring Defining Ordering Gathering Organising Completing Attending Collating Counting Capturing Sorting Maintaining Checking Systematising

SESSION 4 : LOOKING INWARDS – EXERCISE: KNOW YOUR GIFTS

Know your Gifts: Part 1 Preparation

Have some quiet.

Make a list of situations in which you feel most alive. These situations will generate deep satisfaction, energy, enjoyment and fulfilment. These need not be things that others have valued or even noticed. What was it that made you feel fully alive?

Choose up to 3 examples from the list that you are willing to talk about in small groups.

Know your Gifts: Part 2 Discussion

Form groups of 3 or 4 people

Take turns to share the examples of times when you felt most alive. As you are speaking, other members of the group should be listening attentively, and making notes of any particular aspects of you which strike them as significant. When you have finished sharing your examples, ask the other group members to feedback any observations which have surprised them, or offered any insight about you as a person. It is best if the listeners write down their observations, so that you have them for future reference.

Once this exercise is complete, keep your list and the notes the others have made about you. They are not a complete list of your gifts. They do not define you once and for all. Another group might see different capacities in you. But let them be an aid to helping you to own your God-given capacities and talents.

*From 'Live for a Change' by Francis Dewar
(Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988)*

SESSION 4 : LOOKING INWARDS – EXERCISE: WHO AM I?

Who am I?

You may find the following questions helpful as a way of exploring your core purpose. Choose some that you find most interesting if you don't have time to look at them all. Are there others who might help you with this exercise? The focus is on Who are you? –The Real You, not what others tell you, or have told in the past, that you should be.

- What do people come to you for?
- What do those who are closest to you affirm in you?
- What are you doing when you lose all sense of time?
- Which characters in the Bible and other stories do you most identify with and what is it about them that you identify with?
- Which aspects of Jesus do you find most attractive?
- What would be a really fulfilling day?
- What would be a very unfulfilling day?
- What would you like to be remembered at a special dinner to celebrate your life a year after your funeral?

SESSION 5 : TURNING OUTWARDS

Stop, Look and Listen

If you can, visit somewhere or do something different and spend half an hour just observing quietly and noticing as much as you can.

Here are some ideas:

- Take a bus journey round town
- Visit a bus or train station
- Sit in on a Council in session
- Attend a political meeting
- Walk around shopping centre
- Walk in an unfamiliar part of town
- Attend a church of another denomination
- Visit someone in hospital
- Go along to a local community event
- A pub or café that you would not normally go to
- Watch a television programme that you haven't seen before
- Read an unfamiliar magazine
- Do something with friends or your children which you have always resisted doing

After doing something a little bit different, reflect on the following questions:

- What do you observe?
- What stirs you up in from what you have observed?
- Where did you see God already at work and what was he doing?
- What needs attending to?
- Where do you feel drawn to serve?
- Where did you see new possibilities?



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SESSION 6 : SIGNPOSTS TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Heroes or Heroines - People with a Mission

In session 6, we will aim to begin to explore new ways in which we might engage with the world and think about the implications for our lives.

In preparation for the session, could you identify 3 people, living or dead, who are heroes or heroines for you and who engage with the world with a clear sense of mission for their lives.

What did they do and what is it about them that you most identify with?
In what way does God seem to be using their greatest gifts for his purposes?

You may like to use the grid below - there is even space for a picture and some notes about the person, what it is about them that you admire, and their mission.

SESSION 6 : SIGNPOSTS TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Calling in the Bible

Read through the following accounts of calling in the bible.

What can we learn from these examples about how people respond to God's call and the implications for their lives?

The Call of Abram:	Genesis 12	
The Call of Jeremiah	Jeremiah 1: 4-10	
The Call of Mary	Luke 1: 26-38	
The Call of Peter	John 21: 15-19	<i>(All extracts taken from NRSV)</i>

The Call of Abram - Genesis 12: 1-8

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and invoked the name of the Lord.

The Call of Jeremiah - Jeremiah 1:4-10

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,
 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
 and before you were born I consecrated you;
 I appointed you a prophet to the nations.'
 Then I said, 'Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak,
 for I am only a boy.'
 But the Lord said to me,
 'Do not say, "I am only a boy";
 for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
 and you shall speak whatever I command you.
 Do not be afraid of them,

for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.'

Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,

'Now I have put my words in your mouth.

See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,

to pluck up and to pull down,

to destroy and to overthrow,

to build and to plant.'

The Call of Mary - Luke 1:26 -38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

The Call of Peter - John 21:15-19

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

SESSION 7 : SUSTAINING VOCATION

Sunday to Monday Connections

Here are some ideas that you might like to encourage as part of your Sunday worship or at other times at your church to strengthen the connection between faith and daily life and work and support and encourage people in their vocations.

Raising the profile of what people do

- Photo boards at the back of church with people in their everyday contexts
- Produce a small booklet of the work that church members do in all their different capacities in daily life
- Articles in the Parish Magazine about the jobs people do and issues they face
- Organise visits to different workplaces for interested groups

Liturgy and Worship

- Pray for the work and workplaces of those present in the intercessions
- 'What will you be doing at 11 tomorrow?'- slot for a personal reflection from a member of the congregation
- Have a Work Sunday where people come to work wearing their work clothes and bring an item from work to offer
- Focus on different types of occupations in special services
- Sermons about work and affirming work as part of our context for discipleship
- Have a short time to share in pairs at the dismissal / end of the service, to focus on some of the challenges and opportunities in the week ahead
- Prayer resources and prayer diary to focus on supporting people at work and addressing the challenges they face
- Special services to commission people in their vocations in their daily life

Small Group Learning

- Offering workshops to explore vocation
- Small group opportunities to real everyday issues of concern
- Organise sessions to discuss current topics for particular occupational groups
- Organise talks / discussions on various ethical issues - genetics, environment, drug problems, family breakdown, social exclusion, etc
- Organise some sessions on Coping with Stress, Work Life balance, Handling Conflict, Building Better Relationships, Handling Change