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Exodus 31:1-11

Called to Serve

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Introduction: (S#1)

1. If you had one dream project you could be apart of, what would it be?
2. One of the coolest projects in history is the Nasa moon landings, the Apollo program.
3. In 1961, President Kennedy set a national goal of landing a man on the moon and returning to earth.
4. But in order to do that, NASA needed thousands of people doing thousands of different jobs.
5. “At its peak, the Apollo program employed 400,000 people... 20,000 industrial firms and universities.”
6. We all know about the heroes Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin but other people also made it happen.
7. Each spacesuit was handmade by seamstresses who usually women's undergarments.
8. I want to show you some pictures of these normal women who helped us go to the moon. (S#2-4)
9. Women with different ages and nationalities helped protect Armstrong and Aldrin in space.
10. Today you have the chance to take part in the greatest project in all of history, building God’s kingdom.
11. I’m talking about serving Jesus by serving the church—we’re building something that will last forever.
12. Moses offered some people in Israel a similar opportunity in the book of Exodus.
 - A. When the nation of Israel was just beginning, God told their leader Moses to construct a tabernacle.
 1. Tabernacle means “tent of meeting” and it’s where the people of Israel met God.
 2. God promised to dwell in the Most Holy Place and lead Israel as a pillar of smoke or fire.
 3. This tent is very important to Israel as it signifies that God is with them and leading them.
 4. God gives a detailed plan for the tabernacle in Ex 25-31 and at the end he calls people to build it.

(From this text we’ll see God calls three types of people to serve him.)

(But first we need to understand what a calling is.) (S#5)

I. God’s call is a choice, a filling, and a gifting. (Read Ex 31:1-5)

- A. First, God’s call is a choice. (v. 2)
 1. When the Israelites left Egypt, Numbers 1:44-46 says there were 603,550 men (2-3 million total).
 2. God plucks a specific man out of their total number to lead the construction of the tabernacle.
 3. When God chooses you to serve him, you can’t hide in the crowd—he will find you.
- B. Second, God’s call is a filling. (v. 3)
 1. We need a special anointing or filling by the Holy Spirit to do God’s will (Ordination).
 2. God also fills the leader Bezalel with wisdom (wisdom is knowing and doing the right thing).
 3. Not only does God give his servants understanding and knowledge, he gives them character.
 4. The three ingredients of a servant of God are 1) the Holy Spirit, 2) character, and 3) gifting.
- C. Third, God’s call is a gifting. (v. 3)
 1. A skill or gift is different than being capable (I am capable of swimming, but I am not skilled.)
 2. What’s the difference between a talent or skill and a God-given gift? (NT gives multiple lists)
 3. Romans 12:6-8 lists prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership, and mercy.
 4. Likewise 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and 12:28 list a variety of gifts (healing, miracles, tongues, etc.)

5. I believe these lists are not comprehensive but representative (aka. other gifts not mentioned).
6. That means photography, website design, construction, engineering, fitness can all be gifts.
7. The difference between a gift or a skill is what we use it for—serving God or self.
8. God gives us gifts to serve him, his mission, and his church in a special way.

(God call is a choice, a filling, and a gifting.)

(God calls us to serve. How will you answer?)

D. Captain America: The First Avenger illustrates this (2011 Marvel superhero movie).

1. In the beginning Steve Rogers feels called to serve his country, but he's too weak and scrawny.
2. But a Bavarian scientist Dr. Abraham chooses him not for his appearance but his character.
3. Steve undergoes a procedure where he's filled with a secret serum and doused in "vita-rays"
4. Suddenly he's transformed into a tall, muscular, handsome super agent who girls fawn over.
5. He discovers he's skilled very quickly when he's put to the test chasing down a Hydra assassin.
6. But he doesn't discover his gifting till he puts his life on the line to rescue fellow soldiers.
7. Captain America is chosen, filled, and gifted—how much more are we who have the Holy Spirit?

(We don't have to be as cool as Captain America to serve God—he calls three types:) **(S#6)**

II. Bezalels are servant leaders (Ex 31:1-5 Cont.)

A. Bezalel was a servant leader.

1. What we know about Bezalel... his name means "in the shadow/protection of God"(HALOT).
2. He's from the Tribe of Judah which is the royal ruling tribe of Israel (Gen 49:8-19)
3. He's a craftsman or artisan; an artisan is "a skilled worker who makes things by hand." (Oxford)
4. Here we see Moses placing him in charge of the construction of the tabernacle. (Ex 36:1)
5. He has a special name, royal lineage, and talent, but he's not just a leader, but a servant.
6. To accept this call is to willingly submit to God's detailed plans and serve the community.

B. At Cornerstone, our servant leaders are our Elders and Deacons.

1. Our POM says for Elders that "Jesus' model of servant leadership must be followed..."
2. Jesus washed his disciple's dirty feet the night before he was crucified.
3. The Deacons are likewise "servant-hearted".
4. Servant leaders seek the Spirit's will together—we don't have a single Bezalel, but Bezalels.
5. If you're just starting volunteering, it's good to aspire to be an Elder or Deacon.

C. Although I've never served in the military, I think chain of command is similar in some ways.

1. Air craft carriers have over 6,000 crew and aircrew on board.
2. Each crew-member has a role from the lowest ranking deckhand to the commanding officer.
3. I think it's ok to think of Elders and Deacons as officers, but we're not superior; we sin too.
4. We need every single volunteer in the church, especially the non-leaders, which is next.
5. But I want to point out one thing, for Israel, their commanding officer was Moses.
6. Ours is not the Pastor or even the Elders; it's Christ Jesus, he's our chief shepherd (1 Pet 5:4).
7. When we serve the church, we serve Jesus, and join him on his mission.

(God calls us to serve. How will you answer?)

(Bezalels are servant leaders... we need more servant leaders... but we also need others.) (S#7)

III. Oholiabs are humble helpers. (Read Ex 31:6a)

A. Oholiab models humble helping.

1. God calls Oholiab “to help him”—his job is to assist, apprentice, and work with Bezalel.
2. He is from the tribe of Dan, a violent tribe others don’t trust, but God chose him (Gen 49:16-17).
3. If you feel like you’re someone who doesn’t measure up, Oholiab should give you confidence.
4. Our Oholiabs include our Ministry Teams and anyone willing to apprentice (worship/SG, etc.).
5. This role takes humility—“I’m not ready to be a leader yet, but I’m willing to learn.”

B. I want to share some examples of servant leaders (Bezalels) and humble helpers (Oholiabs):

1. At MVBF, Bob worked faithfully to setup chairs each week for Sunday school (humble helper).
2. Scott faithfully lead the worship team each week without pay, he had stutter (servant leader).
3. At Mclean Bible, Rob volunteer to handout bulletins and collect the offering (humble helper).
4. Maria volunteered to lead a college Bible study and get to know the girls (servant leader).
5. At Immanuel, John has hearing problems, but he gave the sound-booth a try (humble helper).
6. Merri serves in the soup kitchen and lead a small group for women (both helper/leader).

(God calls us to serve. How will you answer?)

(We need servant leaders, humble helpers, and we need one more type of servant...) (S#8)

IV. Skilled workers are gifted volunteers. (Read Ex 31:6b-11)

A. Skilled workers are gifted volunteers.

1. This is the catch all category for anyone willing and gifted to serve.
2. The NIV® says, “...I have given ability to all the skilled workers...”
3. The NASB95 says, “...in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill...” (closer to original)
4. God takes people like you and me and empowers us with unique ways to serve the church.
5. It doesn’t matter if you’re young or old, man or woman, boy or girl, God can use you. (Ex 35:25)
6. Look at all the different things these skilled workers make: the tent, the ark, its cover, furnishings, a table, a gold lamp-stand, an altar, a basin, priestly garments, and anointing oil (all for worship).
7. There are lots of different ways to serve God and every one can be an act of worship to God.

(God calls us to serve. How will you answer?)

(We need skilled workers, humble helpers, and servant leaders... which one are you?)

B. The best way to find out who you are is to attend the ministry fair and volunteer for something.

1. You don’t have to sign up for everything... **just try something.**
2. The worst that can happen is you volunteer, realize you’re not gifted, and try something else.
3. I know I’m not gifted at running a sound booth, and it only took me four years to figure it out.
4. We need joyful volunteers and teachable volunteers who want to serve God.

C. The Connection Team sent an email this week that promised a “heart-stirring message on service.”

1. I’m not sure how to stir you into action outside of reminding you what Christ did for you.
2. Jesus lived as the perfect servant, willingly helping the sick, the needy, and the poor.

3. And when he did that, he was helping you and me as well.
4. He became the suffering servant by dying on the cross for us.
5. Now he offers to take your sins away and grant you his perfect service record.
6. If you know Jesus, you're covered, you can't mess up, you're a ten.
7. Now come and follow your chief shepherd on his mission to rescue the world.

(We need servant leaders, humble helpers, and gifted volunteers.)

(God calls us to serve. How will you answer?) **(S#8)**

Conclusion:

1. Neil Armstrong was the first man to step onto the surface of the moon.
2. His famous words are, "That's one small step for man. One giant leap for mankind."
3. What's one small step you can take tonight to serve God and his kingdom?
4. You won't know what God can do through you till you take a step in faith.
5. God calls us to serve. How will you answer?

Ephesians 3:20-21 20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (NIV®)