

Burning Call

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[0 : 0 0] Amen. I'd like to go back today for a little while and I'll try not to keep you too long young guys at camp from Exodus chapter 3. Over the summer months, I'm going to look at some of the stories surrounding the Exodus and around Moses and today we're going to look just very casually very briefly at the Call of Moses in Exodus chapter 3 Now I've just come back from holiday in Northwest Highlands of Scotland and you can tell from the great tan. I've got the weather there was fantastic and Wasn't indoors much but one evening I was indoors and watched a film And the film was called into the wild. I don't know if anyone of you have seen it I'm not going to tell you the plot really this well I'll tell you a little bit because otherwise this story wouldn't make sense But I'll not give the ending away if you ever want to watch it Okay, and it's really just about a guy in America who you know, he's older than you guys at camp

He's gone through school and he's gone through university and he's graduated in law And his dad's very career-minded and really wants him to push on and do all the things that that he should do as a career Lawyer, but he's got no interest and he thinks his dad and mum don't listen to him And he said they've been struggling and fighting and it's been a miserable time and he ends up just leaving Not telling anyone where he's going Doesn't tell his sister doesn't tell his friends anything just Becomes completely anonymous leaves because he wants to kind of go around America discover himself or whatever and end up having a great adventure in Alaska Now I'm not going to tell you what he meets a lot of different people in That story it's based on a it's a true story. It's based on a true event But there's a very profound line in the story near the end If I'd been organizing up, I might have put on the screen for you, but I didn't and

He's not very well at this point and he's on his own in a caravan in the middle of Alaska and He writes with very kind of faint and feeble Writing because he's weak by this point through illness happiness is only real when shared And he came to that conclusion That while he was looking for all the happiness he could just doing his own thing for getting all his friends and family and And parents and everything he realized that happiness is only real When it's shared and and that's absolutely right, isn't it? It's absolutely right. See when you score a goal or when Your team someone in a famous football team scores a goal What they usually do usually all gather round one another because they want to share the happiness of that moment

When Andy Murray one Wimbledon he went to share that event with although there was hundreds Hundreds of thousands watching and people there he went to share it with those closest to him because happiness is an event that's shared and God is a god of love. He's not a big solitary lonely individual in heaven who kicking about heaven looking for people to be friends with and to be happy with So he made the world. It's not like that. God is his love and God has this shared Perfect happiness. He's had it from all eternity in the complexity of him being God the Father Son and Holy Spirit in this great relationship of shared happiness He's never been a lonely God. He's never been on his own and He wants us to know However, you look for happiness maybe in sport or in careers or in wealth or in whatever it might be

He's wanting us to know that true happiness is Only ever found when it's shared With him with God God's so important That only true happiness can be found when we share our lives with him But the trouble is and you'll know this that sin and pride Stops us from sharing our life with God from putting him first. You know, he made us He has every right to be first in our lives very right to worship him first thing in the morning every right to ask For God's advice for everything we do because he's Lord and he's God But sin and pride stop us. We know I'm gonna go my own way I'm gonna find happiness my own way. You know, sometimes it's about like a really greedy footballer There's a nine worse than the part than a greedy footballer that never passes the ball

[5 : 07] Just doing my own Street mom good enough. I'll do my own. Well, sometimes we can be like that spiritually really greedy thinking well I can just do it. I can live and I don't need God. I don't need to think about God in my life But he is the whole of the Bible is about saying don't think like that. Don't live like that Don't live without God. Don't think that life without God is fine. He initiates from Genesis He initiates for is a way back to himself a Way back to relationship with him to friendship with him and to genuine true happy. I'm not saying it's the easy happiness I'm not saying it's the world's happiness saying this is true and genuine God given Eternal happiness and that makes it very important and can I just say for you this morning?

There's nothing that's more important than responding to the living God then hearing the living God and responding to him and Responding to his love and his words in our lives I just want to say a few words about Moses here because God speaks to Moses here in this story Story of the burning bush and he speaks with pictures pictures are always good and he also speaks with words So he speaks with pictures here and he speaks with words and I want to think about that just for a moment or he speaks with a picture and it's this picture that Maybe seems a bit distant to us and we don't really understand anything about it But it's a bush. It's in the middle of the desert can he maybe not that probably that big a bush and We're told that the angel of Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush Moses saw that though the bush was on fire. It did not burn up Moses saw I will go over and see the site why the bush does not burn up and then of course God speaks through that

Now, I don't know if there's anyone here today from Arizona sometimes I think there was someone last week from Arizona, but they've had really dry weather Damn 50 degrees. It's been horrendous and they've had hugely damaging Forest fires thousands of acres burnt by the ravages of fire and here is Moses and remember he's in a desert this isn't Generally speaking like the West Highlands of Scotland where everything's lovely and green and luscious This was a desert place Tinder dry And yet here's this strange thing. There's a bush a small tree and it's on fire and as you know, you think that's a hugely dangerous situation it could spread all over but it's contained and it's also Not burning up. You know, something you've ever burnt something on a fire that's really dry It burns up really quickly Very quickly almost set the lack the match to it. It's away. It's gone

But here's this bush in this desert place dry and it's on fire, but it's not burning up and There's a picture here of God. He gives a picture of his Indestructible energy He's not burned up. He doesn't tie it out. He doesn't fizzle away He's always there with his great energy He's a pure God firing the Bible always speaks of purity and righteousness and goodness and God himself Speaks through the angel of the Lord Through it. So there's this picture of God given here And I think very often we've lost sight of God in that way, you know, we like God as a big cuddly teddy bear We like God as a Santa Claus figure We like him as someone that we can pull into our lives every now and again Maybe even sometimes just once a year at camp. I'll just think about God then and I don't need to worry

I'm about the rest of the year, but here's this great God the source of all life sovereign infinite powerful Real absolutely tangible and real who speaks to Moses, you know Moses and God doesn't exist because we believe Listen to this and think about it. God doesn't exist because we believe We believe because he exists So whether you believe or not today makes no difference to God at the level of reality. He's still there It's not the fact that we believe in him that somehow makes him real He's real the question is do you believe in him and do you trust him because he's this great perfect holy infinite God and we are by nature rebels We're not in his family. We're not even in the squad We're living life we're trickling along we'll die we'll face him, but we'll not face him as a friend

[10:18] We'll face him as an enemy sinners unless We listen and respond to his message. Don't suppress him. Don't push him down. Don't make him insignificant He's this great sovereign God because we have this picture of him here But you know we are much more privileged than Moses We've got a much better picture of God Not I shouldn't say a much better picture a much more a much fuller picture of God in The New Testament where we have the same God on Across you picture that same God on across dying So that you and I can live So that we can become his children so that Christ can be our big brother So that his Holy Spirit can live in us and never leave us and we become Creatures who live forever with them people who live forever and

We do two things with that great picture Of the God of the burning bush that we see on the cross of Calvary you either walk away from it Or you walk towards it. So whatever you do today You will either become closer to Jesus or further away. Nobody will be treading water None of us will go out the same today as we came in we they're gonna be closer to him or further away and He wants to draw us closer to himself. So he has pictures And he also speaks with words doesn't he the Bible is full of words and words are very important And ministers always use lots and lots of words We always go on and on and on and on and on for ages but it's because We believe words are so important and we want our words to be blessed and anointed by God and by the Spirit and

He speaks with words in fact words are so important Jesus is called the word and John Chapter one he has called the word because he tells us about himself and we can't ignore What someone is important as God has to say and you can imagine walking and not now but previously walking into the dressing room or a changing room of Manchester United at half time and Alex Ferguson comes in and speaks to the team People listen He's got something important to say now. I imagine Andy Murray listens to the words of Ivan Lendl. I tell you I would because he's scary looking I Would listen to what he says and he doesn't say much He doesn't smile much. I don't think he says much either, but I would listen and he's got things that are worth hearing and for any leaders here if you want to read about

Good leadership from a human point of view read a book about Alex Ferguson or someone like that great man management skills But these people absolutely pale into significance Before God who speaks?

Well, you who you listening to? Who is it that's important to you? Who influences you? and God says listen to me Listen to what I say to Moses because it still applies to us and he says I'm a God for real people in verse 6 He says I'm the God of your father the God of Abraham the God of Isaac the God of Jacob I'm a God of real people. That's what he says. These are not fictional characters. They're not cartoon characters They're not make-believe. These are real characters that Moses knew about and he says I'm a God of these real people And that's the same then as it is now God is the God of real people. He's God of young lads He's the God of people here who have put their faith and trust in him and they know him and love him as their own God real people can I say just a personal word here to the guys because the most influential years of my life or the years I went to camp I Didn't have the privilege of going to a football camp as a camper because I'm too old and they

[14 : 50] They didn't have them, but I was it. I've been I was at the first ten or so as a leader But as a camper I just went to camps and the leaders of these camps Undoubtedly had the greatest other than my parents had the greatest spiritual influence on me They were real people who had a real savior and I could see that I could see that in their lives And that had a great impact on my whole life camps had a massive influence huge influence for good. I hope Maybe not for others who were at my camps, but a huge spiritual influence for good and Because God changes the lives of real people and I could see that in a way. I'd never seen before God says I'm a God of real people. He's not a God of the imagination He's a God for you and I said God for me and he says I have a loving concern for you For them and for you he says talks in verse 7 about I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt

I've heard them crying out from their slave drivers and I'm concerned about their suffering. It's not a beautiful word I'm concerned about their suffering the living God the God who reveals himself in this way He's concerned about the suffering of his people. I have a loving concern. It might not have seemed like it for them in Egypt They were slaves Things were very bad Moses himself might have wondered what is God speaking about I've been 40 years in Egypt and then I've been driven out and now I've been 40 years in the desert as a shepherd It's not exactly leadership stuff that's going on. I'm 80 years old. What's God saying that he's got concern The goddess saying I do and I said trust me. I'm going to deliver you I'm gonna set you free Now we have deeper evidence obviously and the cross of Jesus Christ. He can't love you anymore

Now I've got four children They're all grown up bar one who's at their camp Ross But if I was in a situation Where I had to stand somewhere the front and someone said to me It's either you or them You die or they die I Hope and pray and I know I said I've had 49 good years. I'll go Let them live That's what I would say let them live God says greater love is no man than this than that you lay down his life For his friends now. I'm doing it because they're my children They're my flesh and blood But God did that for us while we still enemies from And he is God That's how much he loves and that's what you need to consider And he goes on to say I have a purpose and a plan for you in verses 8 and 10

I want to bring you into this land that's flowing with milk and honey Got a plan and a purpose for you deliverance and a future and for every one of us here He has a purpose and a plan Now I don't know what that is I don't even know what it is for me as it lays ahead in the future I know what it is just now. I don't know what is in the future But I can say that his purpose and plan for every believer at a kind of most basic level is To be like Jesus is to be Christ like all the leaders all the campers who trust in Jesus Christ the kids Everyone who's a member here everyone who's taking Christ as Lord and Savior whatever other plans he has for you However great or not By the world standards. He has a plan that you become as Christ like as he makes you And that's tough

That is a tough call Moses was afraid of what God's purpose and plan was for him And it's tough to be like Jesus tough as a young boy to be like Jesus tough in the football team To be like Jesus tough as a leader to be like Jesus tough as a minister to be like Jesus It's tough in your workplace in your studies in your unemployment in the good times and the bad times Whatever else God has for us. He wants us to be like Jesus Christ. Remember that remember that purpose and plan And that's fearful and sometimes you're afraid of what Jesus wants and afraid of what the future holds And afraid of what might happen Well, God doesn't mind us being afraid. He doesn't mind Moses being afraid, but he does say to Moses look I will provide for you I will provide for you he speaks

[20 : 03] At the end and he speaks about his presence throughout it Verse nine and then verse 22 he speaks about the material provisions. He's going to give them He's going to give them plunder From the Egyptians to provide for them. He will do the impossible And that's very significant to remember that he will always provide for us now in the christian life Which is a race and with this i'm going to finish The christian life can be like and it's described by paul as like being a race. I know that's different from football but It's described as being like a race If you're to run a race You're in the race Or you're at the start of the race and you're at the start of that race and you've got a big Willing jumper on It might be hot outside big thick willing jumper on and three layers underneath it And you've decided that you're also going to take your iPad with you

Because it might tell you what the temperatures like on the way around and who might be behind you Who might be behind you or anything like that? And you also want to wear your favorite hiking boots boots To run this race because they're comfortable and you warn them all the time big thick heavy hiking boots That's going to make your race very difficult You're going to be disadvantaged among all the other race people who are racing because you've got all these Things That are going to hold you back and paul speaks about getting rid of the things that will hold you back in the christian race The sins So you get rid of the sins you take off the big thick willing jumper You get rid of the sins that we're going to stop you following and serving jesus. You've got to do it He will give you the strength to do that Also the distractions you've got to be focused not an ipad focused on the race focused on the finishing line And you've also got to wear the right footwear. You can't make the wrong choices. You've got to rely on god and his spirit

That's hugely significant Running his race. We've got responsibilities to get rid of sin To be focused to make the right choices. You can only do that with god with christ As your savior and depending on him. You've got to be reading your bible. You've got to be praying There's no there's no other way. I don't know for a while. Maybe not since you guys were growing up, but Maybe in the 80s and 90s in some christian circles It was it was kind of laughed at or mocked a little bit in some circles to have a quiet time You know we've gone beyond that we've moved beyond these things nonsense every day Learn to read the bible every day pray spend time with god Get rid of the distractions be fit for his race as you put your trust in him But also remember not just that but remember he gives you great help He gives you his supernatural spiritual power to follow and serve him. Have you ever been to an airport?

airports are great places and the the best bit about the airport I like is these flat kind of conveyor belts They're like escalators except they're flat because you can walk at a normal pace and you can pass everyone You're walking you feel like superman because you're walking just normally and then you're passing people who are struggling with bags Because you've got this help. It's got a flat conveyor belt and you can go really fast Well when we're following christ when we're in his way When we're getting rid of the distractions by his grace and help he gives us that strength to be able to walk the christian walk And He says, you know, there's a cross. Yeah, things we've got to give up But he says my burden is light. It's hard and it's easy It's both it's recognizing that he gives us the strength and the help And it's trusting in him. So i'm asking you to put your trust In the lord jesus christ and to continue doing so As believers remember his name. He speaks about his name here. I am

Uh, who I am. I'm time to go into that A great name of god the redeeming name of god Now very soon All our names will be forgotten they talk about a couple of generations Everyone's name is forgotten And you might try to forget the name of jesus It's a name that's ridiculed and it's a name that's rejected and it's a name that's not very cool for many people But what about you because the name of jesus is one name that will not be forgotten One day everyone will stand before him And he is a sovereign lord and god and he offers us grace. He offers us forgiveness He offers us salvation if we will trust in him and in his way, which is The way of the cross so please remember that I pray for the guys

[25 : 19] Particularly the camp these are special times. I pray for your leaders That they will be filled with god spirit as they lead you and I pray for all of us That we will know jesus more out like just to bow our heads in prayer I'm going to pray for all the camps and also remember the camps in eastern europe We've got cathleen and martin who are leaving this week with some others to go to eastern europe To help at language camps there. So let's pray for them Lord god, we do thank you for your word. We pray for its power in our lives We pray that your spirit would take from your truth and apply it to us We pray that you'd bless all the camps that are on this summer run by the free church Thank you for those that have already gone and have been Blessed by you We pray for those that are on going today and this week and those that will still happen in the next few weeks Lord they've been such a blessing to us as a denomination as a church They have been so

Powerful in transforming the lives of so many people and we ask I really pray for your spirit and your Your grace and your goodness to remain with them We pray for eastern europe for christ and for the various camps that they are running this summer We thank you for them pray for martin and cathleen as they leave this week And for their team. We thank you for all their team who will be going from here. We remember Many others going from here for next week to south u.s to the camp there And we pray your blessing on them And we do remember also today SU camps And for the great work they do and for the number of young people that will be there Having fun having a holiday, but also learning about Jesus christ. May that be significant and important to them And to us all protect us protect us from the evil one protect us from our own hearts and protect us from Those who would Pull us away from Christ

We ask in his precious name. Amen