



COURAGE
TO BE NOBODY

INTRODUCTION

Our goal during this series is to help you paint a picture of what courage looks like in your life.

Eric and I decided to share a series on courage. *“If I do a series with you, do I have to use big words like vicissitudes?”* That’s a \$3 word.

Courage can be tough to get a picture of – it’s a bit abstract and looks different for everyone. We have lots of little cute sayings about courage that don’t really help a whole lot. So what does courage really look like?

[**Along Came Polly clip**] Courage for you may be eating ethnic food.

PAUL IS NOBODY

Paul said some heavy stuff that took a lot of courage to say.

I CORINTHIANS 15.9 (NLT)

“For I am the least of all the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted the church of God.”

ROMAN 7.18

*“I know that **nothing** good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.”*

2 CORINTHIANS 12.11

*“I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the “super-apostles,” even though I am **nothing**.”*

GALATIANS 6.3

*“If anyone thinks he is something when he is **nothing**, he deceives himself.”*

I CORINTHIANS 3.7

“So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.”

Who is Paul? Who is Apollos? **Nobody.**

Along Came Polly:

Reuban is a risk analyst. One of the best in the country. His life and the decisions he makes revolve around minimizing the risk. His purpose in life is actually wrapped up in his gifts/talents/skills – yet he has no courage.

Interesting.

Polly Prince comes along from junior high and pushes Reuban outside of who he thinks he is and into a place where he is uncomfortable and sick. *“Since we’ve been together, I’ve felt more uncomfortable, out of place, embarrassed and physically sick than I have my entire life.”* Yet he is living courageously.

MOSES IS NOT

Exodus 3.7 – 9

Notice all the first person pronouns God is using: I have seen, I have heard, I'm concerned, I'm coming down, I'm going to do something.

This is His plan. This is His story.

v 10

God told Moses to go. He didn't ask what he thought of the plan. Does it sound like a good idea? Is he up for it?

All of a sudden this first person God is choosing to do something amazing through someone else. Someone small. The "I" and "ME" pronouns disappear and Moses is left with, "Now **YOU** go."

v 11

Confused and overwhelmed, Moses blurts out, "*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?*"

How are you going to do this?
What makes me so special?

Moses assumed this had more to do with **WHAT** than **WHO**.

v 12

God doesn't respond with a pep talk. He didn't tell Moses, "*You can do it!*"

He answered with, "***I will be with you.***"

It's not about Moses. It's about Him.

v 13

Moses still isn't confident. And who could blame him? He has enough foresight to know that Pharaoh and the Israelites will not believe the burning bush story. He needs something concrete. He needs to know who God is.

v 14 - God reveals Himself to Moses:

"I AM..."

Moses was waiting for the rest. "*That's what I'm asking you. You are....*"

“I AM who I AM.”

God was telling Moses:

I AM the center of everything.
I AM in control.
I AM the solution.
I AM all powerful.
I AM calling the shots.
I AM the Deliverer.
I AM God.

I AM = TO BE; God is identifying Himself by who He is, not what He has done

If God’s name is **I AM**,, it only makes sense that Moses’ name must be **I AM NOT**.

MOSES IS NOT the center of everything.
MOSES IS NOT in control.
MOSES IS NOT the solution.
MOSES IS NOT all-powerful.
MOSES IS NOT calling the shots.
MOSES IS NOT the Deliverer.

In our search to discover who we are and where we fit in, we should begin with how God identified Himself: **I AM**.

Then it makes sense that that’s our name too. **I AM NOT**.

I AM NOT the center of everything.
I AM NOT in control.
I AM NOT the solution.
I AM NOT all-powerful.
I AM NOT calling the shots.
I AM NOT the Deliverer.

I know **I AM NOT**, but I know **I AM**.

DO V BE

Courage then becomes a question of are we living our lives out of:

PERFORMANCE OR WORSHIP
GIFTING OR GRACE
AMBITION OR SERVICE
COMPETENANCE OR COMMUNION
TALENT OR FAITHFULNESS

PERFORMANCE is about human strength. We construct a false self. We find a few gifts that work for us and we try to live off of those. We live life out of our competence.

WORSHIP is about our brokenness. What are you broken about? What tension are you living with? What is completely out of control in your life and you can't do anything about it?

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PERFORMANCE is running at the speed of talent or skill.

WORSHIP is running at the speed of character.

Erwin McManus said, *“Run as fast as your character is deep, not as fast as your talent is wide.”*

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With **PERFORMANCE** comes a lack of joy and peace. We mistake it for urgency.

WORSHIP experiences the fruit of the spirit and a balanced rhythm of reflection. No time of reflection means we are not spending enough time being.

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With **PERFORMANCE** comes extreme reactions. Little things that cause lots of anger and frustration. Our fuse is short.

The focus of **WORSHIP** is the growth that is happening in you. Not a list of accomplishments or completed goals. At the center of my faithfulness to God is not what I am accomplishing or my productivity. Always at the center of my faithfulness is the work He is doing in me. Am I moving towards wholeness? Is my capacity to love deepening? Am I becoming more aware of His grace?

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“What my purpose in life?” – It's the number one question we get from young people. We all have stages in our lives where we ask this question.

What happens is we get so focused on that and it becomes productivity focused; gift focused; talent focused. We try to figure out **WHAT** it is that we are supposed to do and then work our brains out at it and think God is happy with us. Years pass and eventually we have no relationship with God and less of one with our family. We call that faithfulness and think God is pleased by it.

So what's your purpose in life? It has more to do with worship than it does performance.

And it has more to do with **WHO** you are than **WHAT** you do.

If you are **SOMEBODY**, you will naturally do **SOMETHING**.

[**Phone Booth Clip**] – *“My \$2000 watch is a fake and so am I.”*

LOSE YOUR LIFE

Any time my complaints become centered around me (I, I, I, Me, Me, Me), the problem is not what I think it is. It is me.

What's best for me. What's best for my life. What's best for my family. We constantly consume. My talents, my skills, my education, my success, my finances.

If I go to the BP station for a slurpee and the guy behind the counter has to crack a roll of nickels open, I'm goin', *"couldn't you have done that before I got here?"*

"I have to wait for you to figure that out. That's like 2 seconds of my time. I want to go home and watch tv."

If you're buying a slurpee you're not in a hurry to go anywhere. There's nothing important you need to get to. You don't stand there with a slurpee and, *"my wife's having a baby for crying out loud."*

That never happens.

We get so frustrated. We treat our lives like products. We consume, consume, consume.

The façade of self:

- Self-importance
- Self-validation
- Self-value
- Self-worth
- Self-esteem
- Self
- Self
- Self...

"What is it in this stage of life that is about you anyway?". It's all about God. John the Baptist said it like this, ***"I must decrease. He must increase."***

Matthew 16.25 (KJV)

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Life doesn't = bios

Life = psyche = soul, mind, will, emotions, desires, ambition, dreams

~ COURAGE TO BE NOBODY ~

We have to have the courage to be... nothing... nobody.

"I'm not afraid to compete. It's just the opposite... I'm afraid I will compete... Just because I'm so horribly conditioned to accept everybody else's values, and just because I like applause and people to rave about me, doesn't make it right... I'm sick of not having the courage to be an absolute nobody."

J.D. Salinger (literary writer) from Franny and Zooey

Paul said he was nothing... nobody.

Moses realized that he was not.

We discovered that the purpose of our lives has more to do with who we are than what we do.

Jesus urges us to give up our life.

We have to have the courage to be nobody.

SIMPLICITY

The way courage happens is simple: It's worship. Me in His hands. My life in His plans.

There's nothing I could ever give you that would be too much. There's nothing I could put at your feet that would begin to shadow what you've given me. So here's the deal: All of me for all of you.

We make it sound like such a big deal when we say, *"God, do whatever you want with my life, I put my heart in your hands."* We act like that's the crowning achievement. We expect an applause from Heaven.

What else are you going to do? Are you going to invest in a fleeting broken shadow? You invest your whole life into something that at the end of the day will be gone? God is making an offer to invest our short time on this planet in a way that it will never pass away. My life for His plans.

CLOSE

Song - "From The Inside Out"

WHO you are is more important than **WHAT** you do

Strip away your title, your dreams, your vision, your talent, your skill, your competence....

And hear God say that you are prized by majesty.