

“TAKING OPPORTUNITY BY THE TAIL”

Ex 4:2-5

JH told story from Gallup: Was supposed to have outreach, but it was bitter cold. Instead, 2 guys got a list of new converts and people who were struggling and went visiting them: Instead of quitting, made most out of an opportunity. → Most/great breakthroughs in ministry come from simply taking an opportunity, taking a chance on something.

I. THE ARENA OF OPPORTUNITY

A. Wrong Idea: The things we do were all started because of divine visions/dreams

1. All of the things that define us: Music scene, healing crusades, revivals, men's discipleships
 - a. Some think PM had divine blueprint, like the tabernacle in OT 'the blood on the faces in the haunted house shall drip like...'
2. This mindset can produce staleness:
 - a. We're waiting for a vision from God to get inspiration for outreach/evangelism/our city

B. But Our Scripture Tells Us: Opportunity is about working with what's available

1. Moses is at work, carrying the tools of his trade – God says 'what do you have?'
 - a. Opportunity = a set of circumstances that make something possible
2. God is not just asking Moses what's in his hand – He's teaching Moses how to see the world around him
 - a. Showing Moses that in every situation/circumstance – there is opportunity/possibility

C. The Arena of Opportunity: Simply Where you Are

1. With Moses it was a specific tool he had: Rod This can be skills, times, talents
 - a. Espanola: Graffiti contest; Hobbs: Rap competition; Roman G.: his testimony – these are 'rods' in people's hands
2. Often it's a place: Someone gets access to a venue/park/business because of work or relationship – it's an opportunity
 - a. Each city has a 'place' of opportunity a church can capitalize on: Downtown, event center, shopping district
3. Can be a time: Specific holidays/seasons in a city/area that can be taken advantage of
 - a. Prescott's 150th celebration/Marathon/Bike Race/4th of July, etc.

II. THE TRUTH ABOUT OPPORTUNITY

A. Sometimes it Doesn't Look Promising: Our text - It's just a rod/a stick

1. Ex 4:2 So the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod."
2. Many great things start out looking less than promising:
 - a. Original 'Fam Fun Day' – Daniel Swope had an idea for a 'puppet show'
 - b. 1st time 900+ visitors & 30+ saved – now churches around fellowship using this idea and many many lives touched
 1. POINT: At beginning, it was simply the least bad idea we got at a brainstorming session!
3. Often it's the very simple:
 - a. Just witnessing, simple park outreach – no heavy production value/special effects – doesn't look promising
 - b. YET our fellowship was built by simple, unpromising outreaches/opportunities
4. True in all of life: Often great opportunities look unpromising at the outset
 - a. Taking over a broken church; Pastoring in a little town (PM in Prescott)
 1. Unpromising but now countless thousands of converts

B. Sometimes it's a Bad Situation: Our text - it turns into a snake/serpent

1. Ex 4:4 the Lord said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail" (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand)
2. Great skill in ministry: Making the most out of bad situations
 - a. Tom Payne in Las Vegas – church floods so shows a movie at apartment complex
3. Your greatest opportunities will often come as a response to an attack of hell!
 - a. Critical that we can see how bad situations can be turned in our favor
4. Principle: Don't let the serpent win!

III. A REVELATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITY

A. Opportunity is How God Guides Us: Into Effectiveness

1. Ex 3:3 Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight (NIV 'strange'), why the bush does not burn."
 - a. Not an alignment/stars – but a chance encounter that Moses responded to
2. Responding to opportunity is the key that has unlocked more doors than praying for a sign ever will

B. Opportunity is Never What it Seems:

1. Ex 4:4 the Lord said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail" (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand)
2. You'll never know what the real possibility is until you reach out and grab it
 - a. It might be a failure – might be the next 900 visitor outreach – won't know until you try!

C. Opportunity Unlocks Things:

1. Our text: Moses' opportunity unlocked the destiny of a nation:
 - a. What doors might you step through if you respond in a moment of opportunity?