

John Mayer just keeps on waiting on the world to change. It's not that he doesn't care—he sings—he just knows that “the fight ain't fair.” So he keeps on waiting for the world to change.

Every time that song comes on the radio I scream. (Honestly!) The more I hear it the more I hate it. Don't get me wrong—it's not John Mayer I don't like—I'm sure he's a perfectly nice person. But in that song he's got it all wrong. The fight has *never* been fair! But if you want the world to change, then you have to become the change you long to see.

Moses understood that. Maybe he was waiting for the world to change too. Maybe he was waiting for Pharaoh's heart to soften up or for Pharaoh to die—waiting out there in the wilderness tending his father-in-law's sheep and hoping that one day the fight would become fair.

But then it happened. Something shifted and he saw that bush—it seemed to be burning but it wasn't burning up. He heard a Voice calling his name. He heard the Voice making a whole lot of “I” statements.

- I have observed the misery of my people...
- I have heard their cry...
- I know their sufferings...
- I have come down to deliver...
- I have come down to bring them up...
- I have seen how the Egyptians oppress them...

And maybe as Moses hears this litany he responds each time with an “amen.” Alright God, finally...things are going to change. I'm glad you are going to do something at long last. I'm glad that you have observed, you have heard, you have known, you have come, you have seen! Thanks be to You.

But then notice the rhetorical move God makes. The God who observes and hears and knows and comes and sees now offers two more “I” statements. But these are a little different. God says to Moses:

- *I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.*
- *I will be with you...*

In that moment I am convinced that Moses begins to hum John Mayer's song, for it is a whole lot easier to wait for the world to change than to be an agent of change in the world. I'm sure Moses would prefer that someone else go to tell old Pharaoh to let God's people go. He knows that the fight with Pharaoh just ain't fair. So he wants to just whistle to himself—continue with the work he's been doing, working for his father-in-law—which is not bad, really when you come to think of it.

And yet the words echo in his head. I don't know—maybe the burning bush happened just this way, in an instant. But I imagine that this is the way Moses told it to the Commission on Ministry after a long time to process it. I imagine it took him a lot longer to sort through it all than one afternoon. I could be wrong, but I think it must have taken Moses more than a few sleepless nights to make the shift from waiting for God (or somebody else) to fix things and the awakening that maybe he was the one who needed to stand up to Pharaoh.

I want to say today that I don't think this is just about Moses. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's quote today under sermon notes reminds us that the Bible is addressed to us: not just to people who lived a long time ago. It is a never-ending story and when we dare to enter into it we are changed. We are called by name. God still observes and hears and knows and sees all those places where people are hurting and suffering. And then God says: I send you. But it'll be ok; I'll be with you.

I wonder how many burning bushes you and I walked past this week. It's interesting to me that this call comes to Moses in the wilderness. Remember that he was trying to make sense of his past—of the fact that he was a Jew raised in Pharaoh's household. Remember that Moses had killed a man—an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave. The burning bush isn't the first time Moses thought about his calling. He was out there in the wilderness almost certainly because he was running away: from God perhaps, from his own conscience, from the call that perhaps came to him through the voices of others in his life who saw in him gifts he couldn't yet see in himself. Maybe he was just waiting on the world to change.

I think that the wilderness of Lent is a time for us to pay attention to the burning bushes in our lives—and to stop to listen for the voice of God in those moments.

I heard an ad this week on the radio that I've heard probably dozens of times before. But you know how it is with ads. At least for me it is a time when I am often tuning out. So as I was thinking about Moses and his burning bush I heard something new. It's the ad for the 3-day breast cancer awareness walk. And in that ad a woman says, "I kept waiting for someone to make a difference. And then I realized: I'm someone."

*I'm someone.* You are someone. It is not enough to pray to God for peace on earth, or a cure to cancer, or to right an injustice. God will observe, and hear and know and come and see—on that you can depend. But then follow the scary words addressed to us—to each of us by name: you are someone. I will send you. I will be with you.

Forty-two years ago people marched in Selma—many of them Christians acting out of their deepest convictions that no one could say Jesus is Lord and then accept Jim Crow laws. They stopped waiting for the world to change and they stood up to Bull Connor's fire hoses and the dogs to say that indeed the fight wasn't fair, but it was wasn't going to stop them because the times were changing. And that they were willing to become the change they dreamed about.

Where is God sending you? There are so many options. Some are very local. They might require of you to serve a meal to a hungry person or re-stock the shelves at the Food Pantry. We have people from this parish who open those beans and put them on the stove each month, and every week we have people pick up the food we bring in here and deliver it to the Baptist Church. Somebody has to do that work. It may seem minor, but together we move mountains.

The world is in dire need of much change. But where is it that you yearn for change most deeply and passionately? And how do your gifts converge there in ways that make you "the someone" who can act. Who *must* act to be true to who you are. I know that Pharaoh seems so powerful and you may feel so weak! It has always been so. But fear not. The God who sends you will also go with you.