

## WHAT IF . . . ?

### What If God Chooses You to Do Something Great?

*Exodus 3:1–8, 10–11, 13–15; 4:1–4, 10–11, 13, 29–31*



#### LET'S BEGIN HERE

Our Lord is full of surprises! His leading includes twists and turns, ups and downs, potholes and drop-offs that initially shake us up. The fact that we rarely can guess the ultimate destination only adds to the adventure! God's plans for us are often over and above what we imagine or desire . . . and our response is often reluctance. Yet God continues to stretch us beyond what we consider our limits.

The Bible includes numerous examples of individuals whom God used to accomplish great things, but rather than immediately embracing the challenge and trusting His enablement, they held back. They were unwilling to leave the shallow waters of the familiar to dive into the depths of His audacious plan, because they feared the unknown.

In this message, we'll meet a man who felt that way—an obscure, 80-year-old shepherd whose failure broke his spirit and left him feeling “over the hill” and washed up. Little did he know—he was on the verge of something great.



#### LET'S DIG DEEPER

##### 1. In Our Brokenness: Three Frequent Mistakes

When it comes to God using us to accomplish His great purposes, broken people make three frequent mistakes:

Because of *intensity*, we run before we're sent. Because of *insecurity*, we retreat after we've failed. And because of *inferiority*, we resist when we're called.



#### Quotable

*Never, ever think  
that God is  
through doing  
great things  
through you.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



[www.insight.org](http://www.insight.org) | [www.insightworld.org](http://www.insightworld.org)

Original outline copyright © 2013 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.  
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.  
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM01

## WHAT IF . . . ?

### What If God Chooses You to Do Something Great?

*Exodus 3:1–8, 10–11, 13–15; 4:1–4, 10–11, 13, 29–31*

#### 2. When God Speaks: Four Common Answers (Exodus 3:1–4:17)

The Lord's miraculous appearance to Moses from a flaming bush allows us to explore four common excuses Moses offered when God asked him to do something great.

- First, Moses said, *"I will not have all the answers."* Moses focused on his lack of knowledge rather than God's complete knowledge.
- Second, Moses said, *"I may not have all their respect."* He focused on what others might think of him rather than on what God thought of him.
- Third, Moses said, *"I do not have all the ability."* Moses focused on his lack rather than on God's abundance.
- And fourth, Moses said, *"I am not as qualified as others."* Moses focused on his own limitations rather than on God's qualifications.



#### GETTING TO THE ROOT

##### *Was Jesus at the Burning Bush?*

Early Christians read the Bible with Jesus on their minds. So as they turned through the Old Testament, they wondered what in that collection of ancient texts pointed forward to the Son. Many early Christians saw the Son in those Old Testament accounts in which the Lord appeared to a human being. So when second-century theologians like Justin Martyr read the account of the burning bush, they saw Jesus there speaking to Moses.

The reasoning behind this thinking was simple, and it came from Jesus Himself: No one has seen the Father except for Jesus Himself (John 6:46). Therefore, when the Lord appeared in the Old Testament, it most likely was Jesus, rather than the Father.

*Continued on next page*



[www.insight.org](http://www.insight.org) | [www.insightworld.org](http://www.insightworld.org)

Original outline copyright © 2013 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.  
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.  
**Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application**

MM01

## WHAT IF . . . ?

### What If God Chooses You to Do Something Great?

*Exodus 3:1–8, 10–11, 13–15; 4:1–4, 10–11, 13, 29–31*

*Continued from previous page*

Why is knowing the specific identity of the voice in the bush important? Because it reveals the multi-personal nature of God *before* Jesus took on human flesh. Further, it creates a tension in the way that we think about God. Yes, He has come near in Christ, but in the spirit of John 6:46, we understand that the Father remains unseen by us. God the Father stands removed from humanity, accessible only through His Son, Jesus Christ. In this way, we encounter the true expansiveness of God, who is far beyond our understanding. The presence of the Son at the burning bush reminds us that God is both near and far from us. He simply cannot be contained by our experiences or thoughts. The Father's greatness reminds us of our humble state, which prompts us to trust Him.



### LET'S LIVE IT

Moses' exchange with the Lord reminds us of two relevant truths:

- *Never, ever believe that God is through doing great things.* If He did it in the days of the Bible, He can do it today.
- *Never, ever think that God is through doing great things through you.* Time and again, God worked through broken people in Scripture. He continues to do so today.

**In your estimation, what is so damaging about believing that God is finished doing great things in the world? What might such a belief indicate about a person's hope?**



[www.insight.org](http://www.insight.org) | [www.insightworld.org](http://www.insightworld.org)

Original outline copyright © 2013 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.  
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.  
**Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application**

MM01

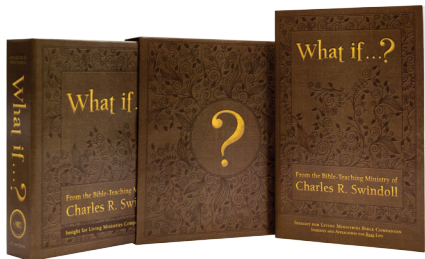
## WHAT IF . . . ?

What If God Chooses You to Do Something Great?

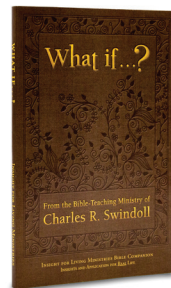
*Exodus 3:1–8, 10–11, 13–15; 4:1–4, 10–11, 13, 29–31*



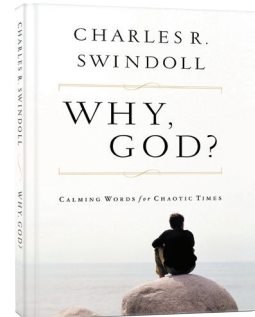
### Tools for Digging Deeper



**What If . . . ?**  
by Charles R. Swindoll and  
Insight for Living Ministries  
Classic CD series and softcover  
Bible Companion



**What If . . . ?**  
by Insight for Living Ministries  
softcover Bible Companion



**Why, God? Calming  
Words for Chaotic Times**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
hardcover book

For related resources, please call USA 1-800-772-8888 • AUSTRALIA +61 3 9762 6613 • CANADA 1-800-663-7639 • UK +44 1306 640156



[www.insight.org](http://www.insight.org) | [www.insightworld.org](http://www.insightworld.org)

Original outline copyright © 2013 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.  
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.  
**Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application**

MM01