

# Exodus 2:1

by William MacDonald

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*Christian parents must prioritize God's calling over the world's expectations, and re-examine their ambitions for their children's spiritual growth and development.*

**Duration:** 29:29

**Scripture:** Exodus 2:1

**Topics:** "Expositional"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of parents prioritizing their children's careers over their commitment to the work of the Lord. He emphasizes the importance of the Great Commission and the call to preach the gospel to every creature. The speaker acknowledges the hardships and sacrifices that come with serving in the mission field, but encourages parents to consider the eternal significance of their children's involvement in God's work. He also highlights the detrimental effects of modern corporations on individuals, draining their lives and leaving them with little time for family and God's work. The sermon concludes with a critique of society's focus on trivial pursuits and the need for young people to prioritize their lives for the Lord.

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## Transcript

We turn in our Bibles, please, to Exodus chapter 2, the second chapter of the book of Exodus. Exodus chapter 2, verse 1, And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi, and the woman conceived and bare a son. And when she saw him, that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein. And she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off to wit what would be done to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river, and her maidens walked along by the river's side. And when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. When she had opened it, she saw the child.

Behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go.

The maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me. Thy will give thee thy wages.

And the woman took the child and nursed it. The child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses.

She said, Because I drew him out of the water. Mr. Pell has been exalting the name of the Lord Jesus Christ here this afternoon, the one who is worthy of all that we have and are. And I would like to stand before you as his representative this afternoon, and say these words to you, especially to Christian parents here today.

Take this child away, and nurse it for me, that I will give thee thy wages. I believe there's a very real sense in which the Savior of the world is saying that, has been saying it down through the centuries to Christian people, whose children are a stewardship from God. Take this child away, and nurse it for me, that I will give thee thy wages.

Suppose you should ask the average Christian parent today, for what are you training your children? I wonder if we were to be brutally frank and absolutely honest before the Lord what we would say. Really now, what is your ambition for your children? And I think that as we examine our own hearts, and as we examine the question, that many of us would have to confess that, well, let's see, a certain measure of financial independence. I'd like to feel my children were going to live comfortably.

And perhaps a certain measure of status in the community, prestige, isn't necessary, but it helps. I'd like to think of my children going to, well, preferably to a big name college, and then when they get out to step into a good job, I'd like to think that they would have a nice home, be able to raise a family in suburbia, and be able to live comfortably, and oh yes, give their evenings and weekends to the assembly or to the Lord. I don't think that's a very inaccurate picture of the way things are today.

Makes me think of Lenin when he started off. He said, give me men who are willing not to give their spare evenings but their lives to the cause. He started with 17 and his doctrine is covering the face of the earth today.

And you say to these parents, well, what about the work of the Lord? What about the Great Commission? Didn't Jesus say, go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature? Well, somehow or other it seems kind of remote. I can see it for other people's children, but I can't see it for my own. In fact, I must confess a measure of distress to think of my children out on the mission field with all the hardships that there are there.

And dear friends, what it boils down to is today, by and large, I'm afraid we're willing to raise a generation of children to give their lives to a business corporation rather than to the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm afraid that's what it boils down to. And the pathetic, the tragic aftermath of that is that we have young people in the world today that are spending their lives on trivia.

We do. We have people today, young people in the world today whose lives are spent studying sediment in Chesapeake Bay, or the summer habits of Wyoming antelope, or the browning reaction of potato chips, or mineral deficiencies in the tomato and the cocklebur. Now you think I'm joking, but I'm not.

I'm stating actual fact to you this afternoon. Now don't misunderstand me. Those young people have good jobs today.

They're right up there in the higher echelon. Oh yeah. But you wonder what it'll all mean a hundred years from now, the browning reaction of potato chips.

Whatever that means, I don't know. You think this isn't real, don't you? Well, dear friends, it's very, very real. The pressure usually starts when our young people are in high school.

It really starts in earnest then. And there is an obsession today among Christian people that the young people must go on, must go on and make a name for themselves in the world. And various subtle sorts of pressure are put on.

It isn't that you sit them down and you give them an hour's lecture on this subject, but it's just in the common everyday round of life that they're faced with these remarks. And pretty soon it builds up an image in their minds. Let me give you just an example of this type of thing.

There was a young man in the Chicago area. His father's an executor. He's a big man and a Christian.

And this young fellow is a Christian fellow too. And his father, the family was determined that he was going to go to a certain college in the south, a college with a good name, a college where they had family connections, and a college with rather a Christian label, which is more of a label than anything else. And this young fellow went down there and he found out that all the Christianity in that college could be put on the head of your little finger.

And he found instead of being a Christian college, it was very much the reverse, that it was a godless place with immorality on every hand. You know, he came home during one of the vacation periods. And one night they had a big powwow there in the home.

The parents, he was ready to step out. And so the parents took out all their big artillery that night and they started to present their strong reasons why it was absolutely imperative that he go on down the long road. And the poor young fellow, he was at a disadvantage.

His age was against him, you know. And so he started presenting the best arguments that he knew how to his parents. Why he didn't feel it was in his spiritual interest to go on in this pathway that they had carved out for him.

And so the louder he talked, the more they would talk. Finally, the evening was growing on. That dear young fellow said to his father, he said, well, dad, do you want me to go on for God or don't you? That's what I'm speaking about.

I'm speaking about this pressure, this pressure that's on young people today to conform to the standards of the world. It's very, very real. And it can result in some terrible shipwrecks.

And so there it is. Most parents don't think that their young people could do so well in a trade. In fact, you don't hear very much about a trade today.

But I'd like to just suggest this to some Christian parents that many young people today can do better in a trade, can have more money to give to the work of the Lord and have more time to serve the Lord than by going through college and getting degree after degree and settling down after that. But the thing that bothers me, dear friends, this afternoon is that many Christian parents today, many Christian parents today would have an apoplectic fit if their children came home and talked about the work of the Lord as a

respectable way in which they'd like to spend their time. Now, this is true.

It's absolutely true. I've told some of you before the story of Isabel Kuhn and how her mother was the missionary chairwoman of their local church in Western Canada for many, many years, sending things out to the missionaries and encouraging young people to go. And one day Isabel came home and told her mother that God had called her to the mission field and the mother said, over my dead body.

That's the way Isabel had to go. Over her mother's dead body. She had to wait until her mother died and then she went out to serve the Lord.

There it is, a blind, unthinking passion that Christian parents today are pushing their young people. And it's really not to give the best of their lives to the Lord. Not so much, really, to get ahead in the world.

I love to read the story of Henry Martin. I think, I And he strolled for the highest academic honors that the school could offer him and he won them. And when he won them he said, I was surprised to find that I had grasped a shadow.

And it was a blessed shadow of disillusionment for him because it turned his eyes to a wider, richer field. Well anyway, let's say the young person goes off to college and now mother and dad are really happy. And this young fellow that we're talking about, let's say he not only goes on to college but he really becomes active in athletics while he's there at college.

And that really is the pinnacle, isn't it? I don't know, there's something nice, isn't there, about seeing a fellow, a well built fellow that goes out there on the football field and perhaps the big game of the season and his parents are there, Christian parents, they're there in the grandstands and as the battle rages they're yelling, kill him, murder him, mow him down and other non-Christian phrases. And pretty soon they rush out onto the field, some men with a stretcher, and they carry the young fellow off the field bruised and battered and maimed. I don't know, there's some sort of a glory connected with it, it's wonderful.

And after a week or so he's around the campus again and his leg is in a cast, well that's good, cast are things to autograph and just think, you know, purple heart, yellow fever, all the rest. Christian parents love it. You know, I wonder how they'd feel if that young fellow were out in Bombay being stoned by a crowd.

Somehow or other, a dear young friend of mine went out to the mission field and his mother, a professing Christian in this country, went to the United States embassy to get him out of the country and went through a nervous breakdown in the process. What do you think of that? She never did it when he was that, when he was at a technical school in Atlanta, I just forget the name of it. Georgia Tech, she never did it when he was going through Georgia Tech.

She never telephoned the dean to get him out of things there, but she got in touch with the United States embassy to get her boy out of Turkey. What do you think about that? It's alright for that fellow to go off to college and break his neck in football. I say there's something grand about it, you know, bringing glory to the college, but to go out on the mission field and bring glory to the blessed name of the Savior of the world, well, that's just something different, isn't it? Don't ask me why.

And then, perhaps after this young fellow gets out of college, he, well, maybe goes into the armed services. And the armed services, well, it's remarkable what you can do when you have to. You can crawl through, crawl over barbed wire entanglements.

You can crawl under live machine gun fire. A lot of people get bruised and hurt, and then the war comes along. The war comes along, and this young fellow might go off into the war, and he might even lay down his life for the Lord in the service of his country.

And people will come around and speak well to the parents, and it's nice, and it's respectable. It really is. You know, there was an island in the Pacific.

During World War II, I think it measured about seven miles long and three miles wide. The United States had to take it for some strategic reason. It was just a little piece of land.

Don't 20,000 casualty, and 5,000 red-blooded Americans never came back. 5,000 red-blooded Americans. Dear friends, half the world this afternoon has never heard of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Five young fellows went down to Ecuador to tell that saving name to savages in Ecuador. They gave their lives in the attempt, and Christians back home said they shouldn't have been so reckless. And when I think of countries in the world like Turkey, with 30 million people without the knowledge of the Savior, and I think of an island in the Pacific, seven miles long, three miles wide, 20,000 casualties, 5,000 people who never returned.

What are we doing to reach the world of the gospel? It makes you wonder, doesn't it? And so this fellow goes off to the war, and if he dies for Christ, it's fine. You know, I wonder what would happen in Christian circles today if 5,000 missionaries laid down their lives for the Lord. It would be absolutely shocking.

Yet it can take place in accidents in the United States, and people don't think a thing of it. Honestly, I believe the day is coming when young people are going to have to choose between being a casualty for Christ and an accident statistic at home. That's about what it boils down to, isn't it? Or a disease statistic at home.

And I do see this, that the day is coming when, the day is quite close at hand, I believe, when young people are going to have to be decided one way. They're going to have to be decided for Christ, or they're just going to drift off to the world. I think the great middle class is gone.

The great lukewarm area is gone. It's going to be either black or white from now on. It's going to be one way or the other.

But supposing that our young friend survives the service and even actual warfare, and then comes back, what's the goal? Well, the job's the thing. In a million and one ways, we tell by our attitudes and by all of our thinking that the job is the thing in life. You say to a parent, how is your son getting along? Oh, they say he's getting along very well, thank you.

Or you say, tell me about it. Why do they say he's worked his way up until he's the vice president in charge of paperclips at Amalgamated Futility Company? That's what they say. And you look impressed.

Vice president in charge of, you say, what did he do? Oh, I think it's something to do with paperclips. Well, no doubt it is. No doubt it is.

Something to do with paperclips. Now, dear friends, it's nothing to do with having a job, and I'm not saying anything about that today, but I do cry out against this attitude that the job is the thing in life. The job isn't the thing in life.

The thing in life is the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Take this child away and nurse it for me, he says, but I will give thee thy wages. And this is the type of thinking that has corrupted us, one generation after the other.

I want to tell you that Christians are born into the world for bigger business than paperclips. And we need to untangle a lot of our gnarled, snarled thinking on this whole subject that the job is not the thing at all. You know how it happens.

This young fellow is an up-and-coming young fellow. He starts off in his job. The bosses, they nod knowingly to one another.

They say, there's a fellow to watch. There's a fellow that's going to be useful to us. And so they start pushing him ahead.

And the promotions come, and the money comes. And the money comes fast and thick. And the promotions come too.

And as he goes up the ladder, he finds he has less and less time for his family, and he has less and less time for the work of God. And yet he's caught in a web. He can't seem to get out of it some way or other.

And he seems to be a victim of certain circumstances. And many times he wishes that the best of his life weren't being given to this sort of thing, but how can he ever get out of it? This is the thing that bothers him. But I want to tell you, dear friends, today that the modern corporations have a perverse genius for draining the precious life out of a person.

And when they get it, they're through with you. Is that true or isn't it? It's true. Well, you just study the automotive industry in Detroit today, and you'll find it's absolutely true.

Wages? Wages mean nothing to them. If they can get a good man, a man who's willing to give them everything, wages and promotions mean nothing to them. But I want to tell you, when he's sixty and sixty-two, he's like that, a nervous wreck.

They don't want him anymore. The thing he's been working for, security, it eludes him when he needs it most. Dear friends, I want to stand here tonight and cry out against, this afternoon, cry out against parents grooming their young people for the unworthy world.

It's not God's way. The job is not the thing. I remember reading in Joyce Kilmer's calendar a little account of Jenny Lind and how she forsook the concert stage at the very height of her career.

And somebody asked her, why did you do it? And she said, it made me think too much of this and too little of that. Well, that wasn't bad. It wasn't.

She left the stage at the zenith of her power. And yet, even as I talk along these lines, I know that excuses come to our minds by the bushel. Here's an excuse.

Somebody has to stand by the stuff. Have you ever heard that before? Somebody has to stand by the stuff. Well, you know, that's one of the best known verses in the Bible.

It really is. That interests me. People really know that verse with a vengeance.

That was what David decreed with regard to those that went down to the battle. Those that carried by the stuff would share equally. But I'm not sure that stuff in that verse means what stuff means today in our luxurious society.

I think it's a different kind of stuff. I really do. What does it mean? Somebody must stand by the stuff.

Does it mean that some must go out into the battle and live sacrificially for the spread of the gospel and others stay at home and live in comfort, luxury and ease and stand by the stuff? I hardly think that's what the verse means. Somebody says, yes, but other people have to be in the upper brackets to reach those in the upper brackets. I'll never forget the first time I heard that one out in California.

A very matronly lady who probably wished she were in high society as she sucked in her breath and said, I love to see Christians in the upper bracket. And with all this type of thinking, we justify our ambitions for our young people today. And then another word that is often brought before these young people is, don't go unless you're called.

Don't go unless you're called. You know, it's a one-way street. It's a funny thing.

They don't say before he goes to the Amalgamated Futility Company, don't go before you're called. Isn't that a funny thing? It's only when it has to do with the interests of Christ and the spread of the gospel that you mustn't go before you're called. Well, in a sense, we're all called.

We're all called. Not to perhaps go to the foreign field, but the great aim and object of our lives is to serve Christ here and represent his interests. I remember that when Jim Elliott was exercised about going to Peru, you remember what they said to him? They said, why don't you stay here, Jim? They said, there's such tremendous need among the young people in this country.

You should stay here. And Jim's answer was, the condemnation of this people is written in their bank books and in the dust of their Bibles. And then another excuse that's said to young people today is, stay at home and make a lot of money and support the work of the Lord.

Well, you know, that can be a snare and a delusion. Because this materialism can grip a young person today and he might stay at home and make a lot of money, but does he give it to the work of the Lord? Is it really going out for the spread of the gospel? I like to tell the story of dear Ed McCulley. In fact, I used to spend considerable time with him Tuesday nights.

We were going through the Old Testament in a class and Ed was there. We used to talk together. And one day his father was in his study and a knock came at his father's door and he said, come in.

And it was Ed. And Ed came in. And he said, what is it, Ed? And Ed said, Dad, he said, I'm dropping out of law school.

And the father said, why are you doing that, Ed? He said, because God has called me to the mission field. You know what the father said? He said, let's get down and pray, Ed. And as he tells the story today, he always adds these words, I'm so glad I didn't say a thing to discourage him.

Mind you, Ed went and gave his life on the mission field. I think that's what normal Christianity should be, don't you? Take this child and nurse it for me, but I will give thee thy wages. You know, when we gather together for a conference like this, I notice that there's been a burden of prayer for the salvation of young

people.

Praise the Lord. A burden of prayer for the salvation of our young fellows and young girls. And I don't say this with any criticism, but I haven't detected a similar burden of putting our young people on the altar to be used for Christ wherever and whenever he wants them.

And I want to tell you this afternoon, I'm jealous for our young people. Jealous for every one of them. I covet them for the Lord Jesus Christ.

And whether they're in a trade here at home, in a job here at home, or whether they're out in a foreign mission field, that isn't the point. Just that the main object, that the main thrust of their lives should be to exalt and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Take this child and nurse it for me, but I will give thee thy wages.

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