

## How to Have a Great New Year...Perhaps

### The Story:

1 Samuel 14:1-14

### How To Know If You're Being "Called":

- Open your **eyes** – the need will be **right in front of you**
- The more we know **God**, the more we know **his heart**

### How to Win The Battle:

- Start your own **skirmish**
- Lead the **way up** or **align with** someone on the way up

## **Food for Thought**

For the week of December 30, 2012

(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

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1. This weekend, we heard about being obedient to the calling that God has for us. The good news is we don't have to do that on our own. The power that enabled Jesus to carry out his calling came from the Holy Spirit and is available to all genuine Christians. That means we have a supernatural resource to help us do things and make changes that we never thought possible. Read the following passages and identify the Spirit's role in empowering us for ministry.

### **Acts 1:8**

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." [NIV]

### **Exodus 31:1-6**

Then the Lord said to Moses, [2] "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, [3] and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts-- [4] to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, [5] to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship. [6] Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I have commanded you: [NIV]

### **John 15:4-5**

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

[5] "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [NIV]

Why do you think God is so concerned about people relying on his power for ministry, and not their own power?

2. As we enter the new year, it helps to be clear about our calling and purpose. How does Jesus make our calling incredibly clear in Matthew 22:37-39 and 28:19-20?

### **Matthew 22:37-39**

Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' [38] This is the first and greatest commandment. [39] And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' [NIV]

### **Matthew 28:19-20**

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [NIV]

How can Jesus' words help us keep our focus simple?

3. When you think of Moses you probably remember him as a phenomenal leader, but when you read about his response to God's call you see him trying hard to get out of following God's direction. Read the

following passages and list each of Moses' excuses along with God's response to each one.

**Exodus 3:11-12**

But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

[12] And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain." [NIV]

**Exodus 4:1-5**

Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you'?"

[2] Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?"

"A staff," he replied.

[3] The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground."

Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. [4] Then the Lord said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. [5] "This," said the Lord, "is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has appeared to you." [NIV]

**Exodus 4:10-11**

Moses said to the Lord, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

[11] The Lord said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? [NIV]

**Exodus 4:13-16**

But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it."

[14] Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. [15] You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. [16] He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. [NIV]

As you think about God's calling in your life, can you relate to any of Moses' excuses?

Do any of God's responses to Moses give you hope or courage in your calling?