



Speaking to the soul

Persistence

And the Lord told Moses: “When you arrive back in Egypt, go to Pharaoh and perform all the miracles I have empowered you to do. But I will harden his heart so he will refuse to let the people go.” Exodus 4:21

God sometimes asks people to do extraordinarily difficult jobs. But this must be one of the toughest. As we know, Moses was feeling very inadequate and ill-equipped for the task. He was now told that when he went to plead with Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave Egypt, he would fail. Time and again, Moses would go to Pharaoh and beg him to release the enslaved people, and repeatedly Pharaoh would say no. God sent one plague after another and even though, at times, Pharaoh seemed to be weakening, he continually refused to let the people go. Even after the tenth plague, in which the firstborn sons and livestock were killed throughout Egypt, Pharaoh withdrew his permission to the people of Israel to leave the land.

What amazes me about this period in the history of the people of Israel is Moses' persistence. To have endured the ten plagues and all the terrible implications of them must have been incredibly tough. It would have been entirely understandable if Moses had given up after the first five. But he stayed true to his mission and continued to go to Pharaoh and plead the cause of his people. This dogged persistence is a quality that we see in many people in the Bible and notably the prophets, some of whom were specifically told that their words would be totally rejected by the people.

We all want to be effective in what we do for the Lord, and it can be desperately hard when everything seems to be going wrong. It is hard to keep going in the face of discouragement and failure. But often God calls us, like Moses, simply to be faithful. To hang in there through the times of apparent defeat and trust God. In doing so Moses

was able to lead the people out of Egypt after 400 years in the land.

QUESTION

In what situation is God asking you to be doggedly persistent at the moment?

PRAYER

Lord God, when you ask me to do something that is difficult, give me also the resolve and strength to be faithful. Amen

