

WILL SAMMY GO TO SEMINARY?
Sermon #2: "The Haiti Series" August 13, 2017 –Exodus 3: 1-12
The Church of the Covenant

The winds of spiritual change are blowing across the face of the earth. The young people in Haiti are waiting for a time of spiritual revival and the rush of a mighty wind. One of those young people is a young man, Sammy, who feels called to go to seminary and be part of what God is doing in Haiti. *Will Sammy go to Seminary????* The good part of the New Testament Mission in Lacroix, Haiti that we support as a church is that it offers young people hope, hope through education and hope through the Lord Jesus Christ. The sad part of the situation in Lacroix is that this is a limited hope for those students. They may have the opportunity to go to class and have books and uniforms and one hot meal per day through the Child Sponsorship Program, and some 45 of you here at the church are child sponsors, but then they come to the end of their education, and graduate, and to what? The State University in Haiti costs only \$150 per year but is reserved only for the elite wealthy oligarchs who are well-connected, so a regular student in Lacroix has no hope of attending there. Other universities in Haiti cost \$2,000 per year, (Yes, I know parents you heard right, only \$2,000 per year). But it might as well be \$200,000 because in a country where the Gross Domestic Product per person is \$400 per year, and in rural Haiti like Lacroix, it is \$100 per year, that means that the cost of going to the university is 20 times the entire income of most families. So a young person dreams of being a doctor or a teacher or a pastor, and they work hard and pass the rigorous annual tests, and then graduate from the New Testament Mission only to discover that they cannot now go on to other higher education.

Sammy is an extraordinary young man of deep and abiding faith. I refer to him as "the Apostle Paul in waiting" in Haiti. You have heard about him before in a prior sermon. He's the young man the Lord sent me to Haiti to speak with three years ago in April about his call. I didn't know it and Sammy didn't know it. But when the Lord positioned me in the cage truck for 2 ½ hours going up to Paul and 2 ½ hours driving back from Paul that was the opportunity for me to share with Sammy the very Bible verses I read today from Exodus, about Moses' call into ministry. Sammy felt, as we all do, inadequate and unworthy of being called to be a Pastor. It was in his heart to do so, but he felt he couldn't do it because when he was in school he was in a rap music group. He felt he hadn't led a worthy enough life to be a Pastor. I shared with him about Moses and how Moses had killed a man. How Moses felt inadequate to be a great speaker and suggested to the Lord that God choose his brother Aaron instead. All prophets are reluctant prophets. All preachers are unworthy preachers. Me, too, Sammy. Me, too. As I shared this story from Exodus with Sammy little did I know it was the very scripture the Lord had placed on Sammy's heart. And he purposed to becoming a Pastor that trip, encouraged by Pastor Pierre of the New Testament Mission to follow his calling. Sammy connects beautifully with young people. His Imperfect past allows him to connect with kids. His musical ability, his gift of singing, has allowed him to put together a singing group of younger kids from Lacroix, "The Gideonites", who have now recorded their first CD! When Sammy gets up on the stage to speak, all the young people listen. The faceless, roaming masses of young people milling about the streets of Haiti, with no future and no hope, will listen to this young man when he speaks of Jesus being the hope of the world. Sammy is sent by God to preach the gospel to a generation of young people in Haiti who will turn their hearts to the Lord through this gifted young "Apostle Paul in waiting". The winds of the Holy Spirit are blowing through the parched land and over-crowded streets, the corruption and voodoo spiritism of Haiti, the Lord is claiming those young people with His love and power, through what Jesus has done for them to give them HOPE. From the time I was a young pastor the Lord laid it on my heart I would meet the next Billy Graham and be part of raising up that young person to ministry. I always thought it would be in this

country. But, no, God took me to Haiti, and connected me with Sammy, and it is Sammy and others the Lord is raising up who will do a mighty work for the Lord...Will Sammy go to seminary????

Moses, is tending sheep of his father-in-law Jethro when he turns to see a bush that is burning but not consumed. He has fallen from being a Prince of Egypt to becoming a herder of sheep. Out of his lack and out of his poverty the Lord speaks to him from the burning bush. The Lord calls him by name. This is no impersonal God, no disembodied spirit in the universe, no mere concept –this is the One, True and Living God, mighty and active, alive and powerful, calling whom HE wills, shaping men and women to do His will as He pleases. Mercy for Moses on a barren hillside. Mercy about to be poured out to a nation of slaves in Egypt through this imperfect vessel, Moses. The Lord softly speaks to Moses in that still, small voice of God, “Moses” and then a little more definite “Moses!” And Moses responds, “*Here am I.*” (*Exodus 3: 4*) Here I am, Lord. I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord. If you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart. I am ready, Lord, only because You Lord are able. I can do this, Lord, only because I can only do this –Your will, Your way, Your plan, Your power. On the dusty road to Paul, on a mountain far away, Sammy said to the Lord, “Here am I.”

So last February I am compelled by God to return to Haiti. There are many reasons not to go; the team trip is cancelled and so I go by myself. But I am convinced I am to go and there is a desperate timeliness to whatever my assignment will be. “*Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*” From 2 Corinthians 6: 2 kept screaming in my head. NOW, Stuart, NOW; not later; NOW! So it is toward the end of the week when I am there and Sammy and I go up on a mountain overlooking Lacroix and the New Testament Mission. We go up to pray. It is a beautiful day; the white fluffy clouds are gathering in the late afternoon and you can see some with grey underbellies over the mountains further away in the distance. As we are walking up the mountain to pray I share with Sammy the story I have also shared with you about how the Israelites when they were in the wilderness would follow a pillar of fire and a cloud; when the cloud moved, they would move; when the cloud remained in the same place, they would stay. They knew whether to move or to stay by whether God moved the cloud or not. By the way, the cloud moving is why I came to The Church of the Covenant some 9 ½ years ago. So Sammy and I begin praying at the top of the mountain and suddenly the dark clouds move rapidly over the distant mountains. In an instant the day changes. The wind picks up. Then it becomes fierce. I almost felt the wind was so strong it was going to knock me off my feet. And every cloud, as far as the eye could see, was moving, rapidly moving. The winds of change were fierce and moving at a rapid pace. The cloud, dare I say it, indeed EVERY cloud, dare I say it, MOVED...and it did so with purpose and power. Even me, spiritual dullard that I am, knew what it meant. And so did Sammy. Sammy was going to seminary. “Here am I”, said Sammy, “Send me.”

Between when I planned this sermon and now I did not know that the means to send Sammy to seminary would be available. But, of course, the Lord provided a generous anonymous donor to pay the \$6,000 for Sammy to go to three years of seminary in Port au Prince. Sammy begins seminary on September 11th this fall. For which the Lord plans and purposes the Lord provides –ALWAYS. So, yes, Sammy **will** go to seminary. But now I think of Loubens, who also wants to go to seminary. And Youby, who I preached about last week, who also wants to go to seminary. And a young man, Yougens, at the L’Arch Orphanage in Lacroix, who also wants to be a pastor...God wants to claim all of the wandering young lost sheep of Haiti for Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ. Through Sammy and Loubens and Youby and Yougens. Will they go to seminary also????? Will HOPE come to Haiti in the person of Jesus Christ? Amen and Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, Pennsylvania
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*