

## Thinking Out of the Box

Growing up I was a good baseball player – good hitter, above average speed and an excellent throwing arm, which allowed me to still throw out runners at first base, after booting the ball.

I certainly had limitations that would prevent me from playing higher level baseball. My best wasn't good enough. Could you imagine what kind of player I would have been if God had decided this was my purpose in life? All of those liabilities would have been turned into assets on the field. (That is what God does – he turns a weakness into strength.)

We are limited because human abilities can only take us so far. The God who created our world from nothing isn't limited at all. But most people shut God out until they have exhausted their own best efforts, and then they plead with God to bail them out. In this scenario, the person was likely pursuing their own path, hoping that God would bless their plan.

There is often apprehension of stepping out of our comfort zone if we are following God's plan. That is uncomfortable and people resist trying something new. You may have tried this exercise before; it certainly is not original to me. The task is to connect the 9 dots with four straight lines, never taking your pen off the paper. Try it.



The people who failed to complete the exercise confined themselves to invisible boundaries. Page 2 of this devotion shows you how to accomplish the task. After thinking beyond your self-imposed boundaries it is a manageable task. Staying within the perimeter of the nine dots, it is impossible.

The Bible gives us countless stories of people who initially limited themselves to their own abilities, before God unlocked their spirit-filled potential. The Lord chose Moses to lead His people into the Promise Land, dramatically crossing the parted Red Sea while Pharaoh's army was closing in on them. Moses' first reaction was "I am a nobody." Why choose me? God's answer was *"I'll be with you"* (Exodus 3:12). Secondly, Moses pleaded that the people are not going to believe me. To that, the Lord answered it is not about you, it is about God (Exodus 4:5). Thirdly, Moses said "I am not gifted to do that," to which the Lord replied, *"Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say"* (Exodus 4:11-12). Finally, Moses said, don't make me do this, God. To that the Lord said that He has his reasons (Proverbs 3:5-6 and Exodus 4:15).

Do you say to God, “I can’t; I’m too old; I’m too busy; I’m not qualified”? We can all think of excuses, but we don’t need to second guess God. Just trust him. God’s answers to your excuses are the same as His answers to Moses. We correctly underestimate our abilities because our abilities are not enough. Kingdom work is supernatural work, and does take a higher power to enable it.

Be open to what God wants to accomplish through you. You just need to step out in faith, outside of the boundaries you may set for yourself. It may stretch you but He will remain with you to see it accomplished.

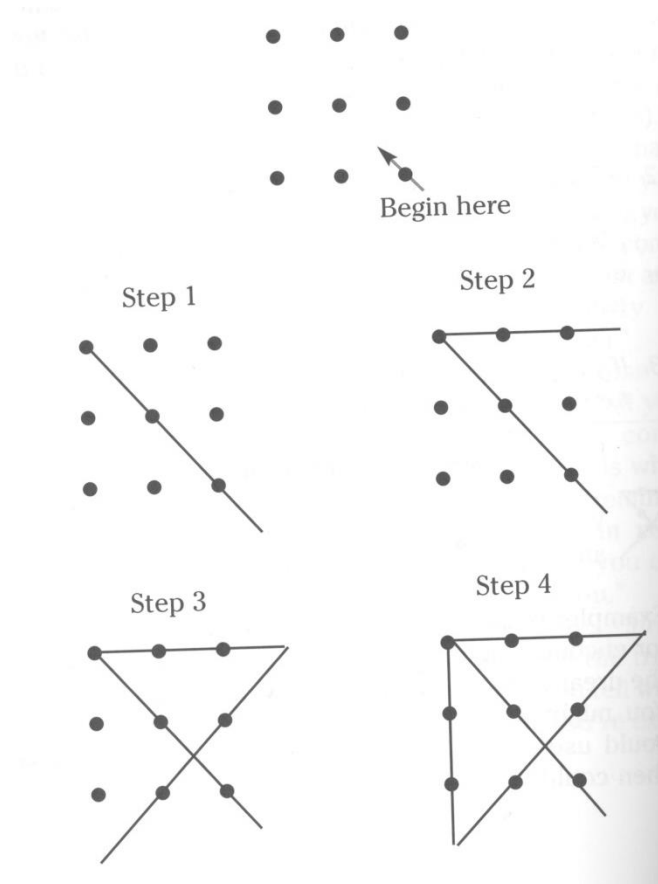
**Scripture verses:** *“This,” said the LORD, “is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you” (Exodus 4:5).*

*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 (Exodus 4:15).*

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).*

**Question:** How would you react if God asked you to do something for Him? Can you step out of your comfort zone, outside your own human boundaries, to do what God asks?

**Prayer:** Dear Lord. Please give us the courage to do what you want us to do. Amen.



Exercise is from Real Followers, by Michael Slaughter.