

Living By Faith

Hebrews 11:23-26

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²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

Last week, we saw from Romans 10, that faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of Christ. Faith is necessary to please God. We are a community of faith. Today, we will see what it means to live by faith. Next week, Lord willing, we will be starting a new series in the book of Jonah.

What is faith and how do you live by faith?

Faith is dependence on God. Faith is belief in God. Faith is trusting God in spite of the odds. Living by faith is the practice of dependence upon God while making choices that are right in the eyes of God. And who do we know what is right in the eyes of God? By the Word of God. The Bible tells us that God's ways are higher than ours. God's thoughts are greater than ours. And his ways are best.

In this passage, we see Moses and his parents walking by faith. Verse 23.

23 By faith, when Moses was born, he was hidden by his parents three months, because they saw the child was adorable and they were not afraid of the edict of the king

The action taken by the parents of Moses was the result of their faith. But why they hide the baby boy? The parents of Moses did not have special privileges or rights in Egypt under Pharaoh. The Hebrews were second class citizens or less – many of them were slaves. The king was particularly ruthless during this time. What was the king's order? Kill all the baby boys. (Exodus 1:16). The parents of Moses knew the command of the king. And yet they acted to preserve the baby boy. How? By Faith! They hid the baby for three months. And then they risked sending this child into the hands of Pharaoh's daughter. Imagine if Pharaoh's daughter gave up the parents to the king. The parents and the child would have

faced a death sentence. Yet, why did they do it? Two reasons are given.

Reason Number 1 – The child was beautiful, he was adorable, he was a fine child. Some believe that there was a special prophecy for baby Moses. No such reason is given in Exodus chapter 2. Saving the baby for the sake of the baby is good enough. Yesterday, in my daily devotions, I was reading through Stephen's speech in the book of Acts. Here is what Stephen tells us about the parent of Moses. "*At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God's sight.*" (Acts 7:20). You see that? The parents saw that baby Moses was beautiful in the sight of God. Every child is a gift from God. Every child is precious and beautiful in the eyes of God.

In our day and age, sadly, many have become their own Pharaoh's. They give themselves edicts to rid of adorable children even before they come to full term. It is horrifying to me that babies are seen as an inconvenience and even more horrifying that the authorities support such a thing. I was reading an article by a lady who wrote about her reasons to terminate her pregnancy. This dear lady wrote this public article on May 18, 2019. This is what she said - "*There has never been a moment when I have regretted terminating my pregnancy. If I hadn't gotten an abortion, I wouldn't have been able to fulfill my dream of starting a career in New York. This isn't just speculation—less than a year after my procedure, I got an excellent job where I made more than double my previous salary. I don't believe that would have been possible if I was supporting myself and a child. Even my own parents, who I never thought would be OK with abortion, ultimately respected my decision once I told them about it*". So a child in the way of a career or salary raise. How sad. God is grieved and heart-broken by such actions! This is the world we live in.

At least the king of Egypt spared the baby girls but today we see people today fighting for rights to spare none. You may be thinking "well, I don't have any intentions of taking anyone's life". Do you know Jesus equated anger to murder? "*You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.'*"²² *But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.* (Matthew 5:21-23)

So reason number one: why did the parents of Moses hide their child? Because they saw their child as beautiful life in the sight of God.

Reason number 2 – The parents of Moses are motivated by faith than by fear. They do not cave into fear. Faith is the remedy of fear. The parents of Moses, by faith, do the most God honoring thing - love their child and fear God more than they fear the command of the king of Egypt. You know the Bible

tells us that “*the friendship of the Lord is with those who fear him*” (Psalm 25:14). When you do right, you have God’s friendship. Why look for man’s approval then? God’s eye is on you to protect you and care for you when you honor him.

So, here are two very specific actions or choices motivated by faith – choose that which is right even when it is inconvenient. Choose courage when you are afraid.

So, we see the parents of Moses walking by faith. And now we will see Moses himself walking by faith. Verses 24 and 25.

24 *By faith, Moses, when he became older, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh,*
25 *rather he chose to be ill-treated with the people of God than the temporary enjoyment of sin.*

Moses was adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter. Moses may have had the biggest break in his life – he was raised as a prince while receiving the care of his own mother in the king’s home. Moses was instructed in the wisdom of the Egyptians. He became powerful and influential (Acts 7:22). Surely, Moses looked at all the hardship, the struggle, the pain and oppression of his own people in Egypt. They were treated as slaves. But Moses had the upbringing of a prince. However, in spite of his high status, he identifies with the Hebrews.

Here is a very specific action taken by Moses. He refused, denied, renounced, abandoned his rightful adoption that brought glory from this world. He had the legitimacy and the rights of a prince, yet he rejects them. This is discipleship in action. Jesus said, ‘*If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself*’ (Luke 9:23-25). So, Moses denies himself and makes a choice. His choice is to suffer, to be ill-treated than enjoy fleeting sin. A little suffering, a little pain, a little hardship is always the much better than the choice to sin. Suffering as a Christian is redemptive. So how do we fight sin? We fight sin as forgiven sinners. By making the choice to refuse the distractions, the pleasures, the boastfulness and the approval of this world.

This is not easy. Some days are better than others. It is a daily battle to wage war sin.

So, Moses walks by faith in *refusing* the pleasures of this world. Moses walks by faith to live with the oppressed than the oppressors.

And this is not all about how Moses lived by faith. Moses walked by faith in hope of a wonderful future. The promise of a future of being with God. This is a promise to you as well.

Verse 26.

²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

Did Moses get his wrong? The insult, the humiliation, the shame, the oppression of God's people better and superior to the all the riches and possessions he could rightfully have? This doesn't seem to make sense. But you see the ground clause and it makes all the sense in the world. A key word that needs some clarity in the word "looking". A better translation is "looking away". Moses was looking away in the future reward. Moses was looking to the reward. Moses did not just endure suffering. He saw his suffering as profit and gain. The reproach of Christ is seen as an echo of Psalm 89:51 – the mocking of the Lord's anointed.

Moses walked by faith because there was a reward coming, a reward that is beyond all comparison, the prize of God Himself for all eternity.

Dear friends, If Christ and His Word is NOT our joy and treasure, everything else will appear so attractive. *"Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ".* (Philippians 3:18).

By faith, the parents of Moses protected him from death. They refused to be cave into fear. By faith, Moses denied himself. By faith Moses chose suffering over sin. By faith Moses regarded insult as wealth. Moses had forward looking faith.

You have probably heard me share about George Mueller. Mueller was a pastor in Bristol, England in the late 1800's. He is known for caring for thousands of orphan children. He is also known to have lived an extraordinary life of prayer and faith. On one occasion, George Mueller was traveling across the Atlantic ocean on a ship for ministry. It was a Wednesday and his appointment was for Saturday afternoon. The weather, however, was not looking good. There was a dense fog. So he approached the Captain to tell him about his appointment. Here is the transcript of their conversation.

'Captain, Mueller said, 'I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon.'

'''It is impossible,' said the captain. '''Very well, if your ship can't take me, God will find some other means of travel to take me. I have never broken an engagement in fifty seven years.' '''I would willingly

help you. How can I? I am helpless.'

"Let us go down to the chart-room and pray." "I looked at that man of God, and I thought to myself, what lunatic asylum could that man have come from? I never heard of such a thing.

"Mr. Müller,' I said, 'do you know how dense the fog is? "'No,' he replied, 'my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God who controls every circumstance of my life.'

"He got down on his knees and prayed one of the most simple prayers: 'O Lord, if it is consistent with Thy will, please remove this fog in five minutes. You know the engagement you made for me in Quebec Saturday. I believe it is your will.'

"When he finished. I was going to pray, but he put his hand on my shoulder and told me not to pray.

"First, you do not believe He will; and second. I believe He has. And there is no need whatever for you to pray about it.' I looked at him, and George Müller said..

"Captain. I have known my Lord for forty-seven years, and there has never been a single day that I have failed to gain an audience with the King. Get up, captain, and open the door, and you will find the fog is gone.' I got up, and the fog was gone!

Beloved in Christ is there a fog before your eyes? How dense is that fog? Let us not have our eyes on the density of the fog, but on the living Christ. May the Lord Jesus Christ give us strength.

----- Discipleship Questions-----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: **Living By Faith.** Hebrews 11:23-26

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

1. What does Moses' life and his parents example teach us about living by faith? Hebrews 10:35-36, 11:27, 2 Corinthians 5:6-9

HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.

2. Just as Moses looked for a reward, do you believe in a heavenly reward? How does this outlook help you in refusing, resisting sin and pleasures of this world? Go around and share. 1 Corinthians 3:11-14, Colossians 3:23-25
3. What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

4. For personal reflection: Are there areas in your life that slow you or stop you from walking by faith? What will you do about it?