

Heb 11:24-28 The Faith of Moses

Today, I look forward to considering the faith of Moses, which I hope will be helpful to us. I have four truths about faith: 1) Faith unites the heart with the people of God; 2) Faith views suffering with the people of God as a worthy goal; 3) Faith endures; and 4) Faith looks to the sacrifice of God for salvation. Let's begin.

1. Faith unites the heart with the people of God. Look at v. 24-25: **“By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin . . .”** Notice the desire . . . the heart, of Moses. It is to be associated with the Hebrews, who are called the “people of God.” Now, Moses grew up in the household of Pharaoh. By legal standards, he was the son of an Egyptian. He was “adopted” into the most powerful family in Egypt, the king. Yet, when he was older, he chose to associate himself with Israel. And the text doesn’t say he associated with the Hebrews because he himself was a Hebrew, but instead, he associated with them because they were the people of God. And this association happens ONLY by faith. By faith Moses was united to God’s people. And, I believe this was his greatest desire. Otherwise, why would he leave all the wealth, the power, the prestige, the culture, etc. of Pharaoh’s family to go and identify with a nation of slaves?

In the same way today, the person of faith desires to identify with God’s people. I think of a magnet that is drawn to metal. I think of oil that is poured into water and immediately bonds with the oil and not the water. In real life, I think of Ruth and Naomi as she says, **“Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God”** (Ruth 1:16). I listen to a lot of war history. And I am often struck with the great bond between soldiers in a foxhole. There is nothing more dear to a soldier in a foxhole than the soldier next to him. In the same kind of way, faith draws us to other Christians.

I am reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul to churches he planted. To the Romans, he always prays for them and says, **“I long to see you . . .”** (Rom. 1:10-11). To the Philippians he says, **“For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus”** (Phil. 1:8). And later: **“Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown . . .”**

Application: Do you love the church? (and not just the universal church, but the local church). Do these words and actions of Moses and the Apostle Paul fit your experience as you consider those in the seats beside you today? If not, where is your faith? If your heart is continually drawn to other things, maybe there is no faith. Question: Who do you gravitate towards? The world? Or the people of God? In many cases, professing Christians, I think, merely “tolerate” the people of God on Sundays.

I see evidence from our culture that as Christians, we often think in terms of “going” to a building, “listening” to a sermon from home, or just merely “attending” as if we’ve done our duty for the week. But what does Moses do? He chooses to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. The church is a people, not a place, not an event, not just a weekly meeting, not an attendance on Sunday. The world knows we are Christians by the way we LOVE one another. And those whom we love are our treasure. We treasure the

fellowship with other Christians. This is what faith does. If this is not your desire, there is no faith.

2. Faith views suffering with the people of God as a worthy goal. Look at v. 26. Moses **“considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt . . .”** By faith, Moses, with all his rights as Pharaoh’s daughter, all the wealth of his family, all the power and prestige of his upbringing, would rather identify with the Hebrews. And if we look back to v. 25, to associate with the Hebrews meant that, not only would Moses leave his riches, he would also be **“mistreated with the people of God.”** In v. 26 our author speaks to the Hebrew Christians of his day, calling this mistreatment the **“reproach of Christ.”** In other words, just as Moses, by faith, chose to be mistreated with the people of God, so his readers would also leave behind the old Mosaic system of worship with all its sacrifices and continue to trust Christ and his one-time sacrifice.

But there is more here than just making a choice to be persecuted with God’s people. This is such a telling verse when it comes to suffering persecution and associating with the lowly. If I am reading this correctly, Moses considers suffering with God’s people (who were slaves) as something VALUABLE, more valuable than the wealth of Egypt. How can this be? Well, only faith understands this truth! What Moses possessed BY FAITH, could not compare with the riches of this world. He compares suffering with wealth. And he calls it the **“reproach of Christ.”** And simply put, to bear the reproach of Christ means to suffer the same kind of persecution that Jesus suffered, to experience the conflict associated with a world that hates Christ. Jesus says, **“If they persecuted me, they will persecute you. A servant is not greater than his master”** (John 15:20).

Now, you may find this truth a bit difficult. For none of us like persecution. But, we don’t have to like it to find it valuable! We do not seek out persecution, but when it comes, by faith, we will esteem it as valuable. There is a story in Acts 5 where the apostles are preaching the gospel of Christ. They are arrested and put into prison. And during the night an angel of the Lord opens the prison doors and they miraculously walk out. And the very next morning, they hurry straight to the temple and begin to preach Jesus again. And again, the religious leaders come and arrest them and ask them why they continue preaching about Jesus. And they say, “It is better to obey God than to obey men.” Then they beat the apostles and let them go. And Acts 5:41 says **“Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.”** Now, did they like the floggings and the persecution? Of course not! But, they did find it valuable, as we see the word “worth.” In other words, it was worth it! This is EXACTLY what we see with Moses (and all of Heb. 11)! People of faith finding persecution with the people of God . . . valuable.

Application: Faith does not value what the world values. You cannot serve both God and money! You cannot have two masters! And faith always chooses that which is most valuable, that which is more worthy. And such is Christ! One of our favorite hymns says:

“When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.”

Before moving on, let me share a couple truths about how this truth pictures the gospel of Christ.

Truth: As Moses left his glory in Egypt to suffer with the people of God, so Christ left his glory in heaven to take on flesh. Paul writes to the Philippians: **“who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross”** (Phil. 2:6–8). Now, we do not follow his example by becoming God’s sacrificial lamb. For there is only ONE sacrifice in this regard, which is Christ. But, we do follow his example in the way we treat one another.

Truth: As Moses found suffering with the people of God as valuable, so it is written of Christ, **“who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God”** (Heb. 12:2). What a beautiful savior who associates with sinners.

3. Faith endures. Look at v. 27: **“By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.”** This has been a repeated theme in my preaching through Hebrews. For this is the context of the book: endurance by faith. And what is faith? Look back to Heb. 11:1: **“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”** And then v. 3: **“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.”** For the person of FAITH, invisible things become substance. By faith, Moses saw the invisible God, and this was way before the burning bush, and all the times God spoke to Moses “face to face.” Moses, through all the years in the dessert, and through the all the difficulties in Egypt as he identified with the Hebrews, he endured.

The immediate application to this truth is that a person who has faith will endure. With Moses, he trusted the promises of God. And more than the promises, he trusted the ONE behind the promises . . . God. And though he could not see it as I am looking at all of you today, by faith, he saw the fulfillment of all God’s promises in Christ. Again, he did not see Christ with his eyes. And he certainly did not know exactly how God would fulfill his promise to take care of his sins and save his soul. But, by faith, he did look forward to the Christ who would come and fulfill God’s promise from Gen. 3:15. Do you remember what Jesus said of Abraham in John 8. He told the religious leaders, **“Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad”** (John 8:56). He saw Jesus . . . by faith. And he endured!

This means there is something, or more precise, SOMEONE, faith holds onto (the EYES of FAITH) that causes endurance. Moses looked forward to the day of Christ because it was the promise of God. Today, as we read the Book of Hebrews, we have the full revelation of God’s promise in whom? In Jesus. Heb. 1:1-2: **“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son . . .”** Now look over at 12:1-2: **“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”** We look back upon the person and work of Jesus. And by looking unto HIM, we still live by faith knowing that one day God will do away

with sin and Satan and death. And he will recreate a new heaven and a new earth. This is how we still live by faith NOW. And this is why we endure . . . now.

Sometimes, I feel like I am only hanging on by a thread. And I pray like the father of the demon possessed boy, **“Lord I believe, help by unbelief”** (Mark 9:24). This man looked to Jesus. This is what we must do . . . ALWAYS, every day. For without Him, we can do nothing (John 15).

Application: Faith casts out fear (v. 27). Moses does not fear the “anger of the king.” But instead, he endured. Faith does not fear man, but instead fears God. If we are doing what is right by faith as we look unto Jesus and as we live our lives as He commands, we will not fear what man thinks of us. And, we may receive the same persecution as our Lord and even die as a martyr. In Matt. 10:28: Jesus says to us: **“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”**

4. Faith looks to the sacrifice of God for salvation. We’ve really already talked about this truth, but I want to get more specific as we consider v. 28: **“By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.”** In these verses we see that by faith, Moses institutes the Passover. And in doing this, Moses trusts the blood of a lamb. After the Exodus, God will give Moses scores of laws, that will govern the nation of Israel in how they worship, how govern themselves, and how they live morally. And it is interesting that the Passover is the VERY FIRST law given to the Hebrews, which shows its importance.

Egypt had just lived through 9 plagues that had devastated the country. Yet, Pharaoh was unwilling to let them leave. But now the time has come for one more plague, the death of the firstborn, both of people and animals. But before the angel of death comes, God instructs Moses and the Hebrews to slaughter lambs, one for each household. Then, they must sprinkle some of the blood on each doorpost. And then, they are told to get ready, put on their sandals, and cook the lambs and eat every bit of them, as they wait. Exod. 12:13 says: **“The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.”** And we know the rest of the story. The Angel of Death comes down to Egypt and those with the blood over their doors were Passed Over. They were not destroyed. And the following day, Israel is delivered from slavery! By Faith Moses instituted and kept the Passover.

We cannot imagine how the instructions of the Passover went against all reason at such a time in their lives. Yet, it was the very first ordinance, the very first law given to Moses and the Hebrews. Why? Well, by faith and obedience, they were saved from death and delivered from slavery. But, this Passover is given for another reason. It pictures the great sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Today, we do not slaughter a lamb and place its’ blood over our doors. Why? Because Jesus Christ died on the cross and he rose again. Our faith is in the blood of Jesus. This is what the Book of Hebrews is about; the end of the old system of worship under the Law of Moses. Today, there is only ONE sacrifice, only ONE lamb, only the blood of One, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The blood of bulls and goats cannot atone for sins.

Application: Works will not save anyone. It is interesting that Moses is the giver of the law. Yet, in trusting God in the Passover, he shows that law cannot save from the consequences of sin and death. The only reason the Hebrews were saved that awful night in Egypt was because of faith in the blood that placed on their doors. This is faith. Today, we are saved, not by works, but by faith in Jesus Christ. Eph. 2:8-9 **“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”**

Application: In the story of Moses, we also see repentance. It is very important that we see the order of truth given in vv. 24-28. The keeping of the Passover and the sprinkling of blood is not the first thing recorded with Moses. The first thing recorded is that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. Then, he chose to be mistreated with the people of God rather than the fleeting pleasures of sin. Then, he left the treasures of Egypt. All of this happens before the institution of the Passover. This is repentance! And repentance and faith go together. I think of my own conversion. And I did not come to Christ without a knowledge and recognition of my sin before God. My sin was great upon my mind and my heart. And then, by faith, I realized Jesus died for my sins. The blood of the cross was applied to my heart. This is so important in evangelism and in preaching. The consideration of the sinfulness of sin and repentance must come before the preaching of the cross. Today, in our culture, there is great preaching about the love of God. But, is void of the preaching of repentance. A.W. Pink says, *“To make men believe that God loves them, while they are under his wrath, is worse than a physician telling a diabetic that he may eat what he wishes.”* This is why there is great value in preaching the law and the commands of God in both the NT and the OT, as we also preach the Gospel.

And in closing, what about us/you? Is repentance your daily desire? Repentance is not a one time event where you walk an isle or raise your hand and go live as you desire. Repentance is a work of grace in the heart . . . as is faith. You may not be asked to leave a palace, but you are commanded to give up the world of sin. This is exactly what we see with Moses and his faith. In summary: 1) Faith unites the heart with the people of God, 2) Faith views suffering with the people of God as a worthy goal, 3) Faith endures, and 4) Faith looks to the sacrifice of God for salvation.