

The Hall of Faith: Moses

Hebrews 11:23-29

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, March 26, 2023

Well, good morning, everyone. As many of you know, I often take the time before a sermon to talk about some shepherding issues. I think that's appropriate for a pastor. Part of your job is to preach and teach the Word of God to the people and bring it to bear in their lives. Part of it's also just to talk about where they're at spiritually where the church is at and try to care for your souls that way. And this week, I was really blessed with a blog that someone put on the internet from our church, and I wanted to share it with you. It was called "Reasons to Stay in Your Church". Let me just read. It's a little bit long, but it's very good. So just bear with me while I read this to you. But it said this, it said,

In my fairly small town, Chilliwack, there are over 50 churches. Sadly, church growth comes mainly through church-swapping, provided you're on the winning side. Are there good reasons for leaving a church? Sure. And those possible good reasons can be found elsewhere. For example, here, here, and here, [she had links to some different things that she said,]

But I think many people leave churches in a similar way to switching gym memberships or their preferred grocery store. Brighter equipment, greater perks, and a dream-like notion that things are better over there, and the people perhaps healthier or more your type.

"Reasons to leave a church" gets roughly 240 searches on Google monthly in the US, while "Reasons to stay in a church" gets nada. This may indicate that a lot of churches stink, but it's also indicative of the self centered, discontent generation we are.

As Christians, we shouldn't love controversy, grumbling, and nit picking at the church, or at our leaders. If we spend more time criticizing than we do loving people and building them up in the faith- there's likely something wrong with us. In fact, we are looking in the wrong direction. Instead, we need to get the log out of our own eye before going after someone's speck.

Philippians 2:14-15 "Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

The Unique Blessings of Staying in a Church: She says,

My husband and I have been with many of the same believers since before we got married, over 15 years ago. We endured a large church split, but the Lord was faithful and kept many of us together. Fifteen years is enough time to experience some significant blessings I want to share with you. Here's some of those.

Number one you get to see your pastor grow. There's a flawed human willing to stand up at a pulpit every Sunday and pour his heart out to you. If you are highly blessed, he preaches to you from the living Word of God. Count yourself double blessed if he actually takes considerable time to study it. [Fair enough.]

What a time we live in, where the Word of God is at our fingertips. And what a fearful thing to stand before other sinful beings and preach it week after week. I tremble at the thought.

There's a million places to fail. Pride. Bad attitudes. Big personalities that crowd out God himself. Small, meek personalities that have little excitement, or voice inflection and appear to lack passion. Too emotional, not emotional enough.

Failed interpretations, failed applications, flat out mistakes.

But then, there's glimmers of the glory of the only begotten Son of God. There's something beautiful that shines through that humble, quiet man. Or something soft and breaking in the heart of a too-prideful pastor. God uses a word here and a word there to convict sinners, to save unbelievers, to transform lives. That is, if you're not too proud yourself to receive it.

Bit by bit, your pastor grows in character, in skill with the word, in leadership qualities. It takes time- just like it does for every other member. You pray, you rejoice, you are thankful, you have patience, you trust God with your imperfect pastor and elders.

That's one blessing. The second blessing she mentions is that you get to see fellow believers grow in faith, love knowledge and deeds. She says,

If you swap churches every couple years, you'll never have the blessing of seeing what the Lord does in a DECADE with someone. The maturing of believers looks to me like a "harvest of righteousness... sown in peace by those who make peace (James 3:17). They go and bear fruit, fruit that abides and feeds others. They weather storms and come out gold- if you wait for it. What a beautiful thing to miss, when we leave in the middle of a mess. What if the Lord would bear fruit in his time? Could you wait for it In faith, you can remain in your church, careful not to uproot new shoots, or tangled vines, careful not to cut down the tree before it has a chance to provide shade.

So that's another blessing. The third one is you get to watch your children and families grow.

It's a unique blessing to watch children grow from tiny babies into teenagers. Then eventually, those teenagers grow up and marry, and those newly weds, become parents. Maybe, you are a Sunday School teacher or Youth Leader, and in some small way you get to contribute to the life of that child. You share simply in the blessing of having taught them, known them, and seen them grow physically and spiritually. This is precious to the Lord, and to your own heart.

And then fourthly, she said, your roots get deeper and you grow.

You simply are not meant to grow outside of a body of believers. Once in that body, you're not meant to grow by fixating on yourself. When you look to your wants, your needs, and even your own hurts- you'll become discontent with your church quickly. But when you seek to love and serve others, it is incredible how quickly [you grow in Christ.]

And then she closes the art of the blog and says,

Do you say you don't believe in "easy-believism"? Then why do you believe in easy church membership?

Romans 15:1-6 "We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me."

That was really good, wasn't it? And I just read it to you to say, if you've been with Grace Fellowship Church for a while, you'll know that we have had people come and go in the life of the church. I think that's pretty normal in churches; most churches sail on stormy waters. But our journey has been our own journey. If you go to a church down the street, it would probably look different. But for us, when I first came six years ago, we had just gone through a church split. Matter of fact, the split had been about a year or two before that, and there had been a lot of work to smooth over some of the hurt and minister to the people and care for them. Grace Advance did that, the men of the congregation did that; I applaud them for that. But the hurt was still there. I think for about the first year I was here, it wasn't too unusual to have someone weeping in my office about once a week over what had happened. So that was one thing in the beginning.

And then the next thing that we worked through as a church, where some people left over was leadership. If you go from a church that doesn't have elders or deacons to that type of thing to a church that has that it's going to it's going to rock the boat. And so that was a couple of years, and some people left over that.

And then there was the whole Coronavirus thing, you guys are familiar with that. We don't have to say anything about that, that was just a crazy time for everybody. I think in British Columbia, we had some of the longest restrictions in North America. I don't know if they were the harshest, but they just drug out for so long. So whatever awkwardness was there was just stretched out.

And then recently, there's been some concern over sermon criticism, and I just want to talk about that just so I'm transparent with you as a congregation. These aren't easy things for me to talk about. I don't enjoy being criticized any more than anybody, but it is my job to do the best I can to bring the Word of God to bear in your lives and to listen to feedback. And so there's been some concern that sermons are not deep enough or precise enough or sometimes everyone can't see where I'm getting things from and

we take that seriously as elders. That's why I'm talking about it. We don't hear that and ignore that. And so what we've done is, you know, we've talked about it as elders, we've listened to some sermons and gone back and forth about what we can what I can improve. We've also gone to my sending agency, Grace Advance, they're the ones who did my ordination years ago, so they've been part of this journey with me. And they've listened to sermons as well. And, and the word is, what I'm hearing is work on things, pursue, try to do all things for the glory of God, change this and that, but just stay the course.

But I say that to say if any of these things concern you as a church, I would ask you, please don't leave. And please come talk to us about them. We want to do all things for the glory of God and work on this together. And let me just say this, when I came here years ago, I really didn't know what I was getting into because I only visited Canada one time. And that was when I came to see you just for a candidating trip. But I came with the expectation that I was an imperfect pastor pastoring an imperfect people. And what I mean by that is, I never thought I was going to do everything perfectly. If that equation ever gets wrong, the church won't make it. If the pastor thinks he's perfect, and he's the Pope and he's infallible, the whole thing is gonna fall apart. He's always got to be humble. On the flip side, the people have to be humble as well. And there's got to be a work of grace on both sides. We have to be gracious with each other. Have this open conversation. So I say all that to appeal to you. Let's stay together. Let's work through these things as a family. This is kind of your sermon before the sermon. I love you guys. I want to see the Lord do great things in our congregation.

But one thing we have to do in order to make it, is we've got to be unified. We've had some seasons of unity as a church, but there's always been these different things that have come up. And what we want to do is grow in in our peacefulness as a body of Christ. Our church is not mature when it fights all the time. That's not a mature church. And you can read the New Testament and see that I mean, the churches Paul dealt with that he would challenge in the area of maturity, were the ones that fought against each other. I had an opportunity yesterday to go to a birthday party, a few doors down of a Romanian family, and I was talking with a man and he said, "Yeah, this this pastor over here, he's planted 10 churches in the Ukraine." Wow. Okay, so I went and talked to this guy. And it fascinated me that what he was saying was the church was growing in being unified because they're in the midst of war on the outside, so they can't fight with each other. I've started to pray for war in Canada. I have not done that. But I did think that was interesting that he said that. But let's pursue these things together.

And with that said, let me just dive into our actual sermon. So please open your Bibles with me to the book of Exodus.

This morning, we are looking at the next person in the Hall of Faith. We're just going through the Word of God together, and that's Moses, the great Redeemer of Israel. And to introduce him to you, I just want to read about him with you in Exodus 3.

As a matter of fact, before I read this to you, can I just pray, so we can have our minds on the Word of God?

Heavenly Father, we love You deeply. And we care very much about things we hear in Scripture. And every week we come in here with an intention just to study You, and have our minds fixed on You. We all have our distractions. We all have things that we deal with throughout the week and expectations and just our backgrounds. But Father, we want to be unified around Your word, help teach us about this man, Moses. What a life to study in just one sermon. It's just amazing the things You did through him. Would You draw the applications and lessons that we hear from his life, penetrated deep into our hearts that Christ may be glorified. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

So Exodus 3 says this, says,

Now Moses was pasturing, the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you're standing is holy ground." He also said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and I've given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them.

"Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."

It will stop the reading there. As you go through that, I'm sure that many of you have read this story before but if you have you'll know it's called The Story of the what? The burning bush, right. It tells about the time the Lord called Moses from the midst of the bush that burned and it was not burned up. It

was blazing but it was not consumed, which is unusual because that's something you don't see very often.

And just to give you the setting of this, verse one tells you that Moses what he was doing at the time, when it said he was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father in law, that means that he was shepherding. He was out in the wilderness raising sheep. Now, the reason that's significant is because earlier the book of Exodus it says he lived in the court of Pharaoh, or he was in the home of Pharaoh's daughter, growing up in the lap of luxury. He had the world at his fingertips, all the different things that he wanted, and now he doesn't have much of anything. His fortunes have entirely changed because he goes from the top of society down to the bottom. The Egyptians actually thought shepherds were disgusting, because they spend all their time with animals. That's what he's doing here. And in fact, verse one tells you where he was at specifically, when it says that "Now Moses was pasturing, the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God." Now, that's another way of saying he came to Mount Sinai, or the place where Moses would later take the Jews to worship on this mountain as verse 12 indicates. You can see that phrase used in this mountain, when it says, "this will be a sign I have sent you, when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain." It went by multiple names. It was called Mount Sinai because it was located in the desert of Sinai, which is a 23,000 square mile tract of land that stuck in the middle between Israel and Egypt. It's like a land bridge between two countries. So that in order to go from one place, you have to go through the other. And the importance of it is that this is the area where the Lord would later make the people of Israel wander in, before they went to the Promised Land. Do you remember the Lord told them to conquer the Promised Land, they wouldn't do it, so He made them travel in that area for 40 years? And the idea here is the Lord put Moses there to prepare him for that. This was his training ground for that experience.

And as he's out there, verse two says the angel of Lord appears to him in the midst of the burning bush. Now there's been some who have wondered, well, what is the angel of the Lord here? Well, apparently, it's not just a normal angel. It's more than that. Because for one thing, he appears in the midst of a fire. If you notice, he's not near the fire or close to the fire or beside the fire, he's in the thick of it. Some have said, "Boy, it would have been weird to see a burning bush." I don't think that was the thing that really concerned Moses the most, it was that someone was in it. And he goes on to tell Moses, "Don't come near me, but remove your sandals for the place you're standing is holy." In other words, keep your distance. You can't approach me however you want to because this was not a typical messenger. It was none other than God. If you look, verse six, says, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." And the same verse says Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Now, that's what's called a theophany, or an appearance of God on earth. Because it's one of those rare times in the Old Testament, when God leaves his place in heaven for a moment to come down and reveal Himself to someone in this way, in a visible way. Some believe this would have been the pre-incarnate Christ. And as He does this, this is what the Lord tells Moses, He says, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and I've come down to deliver them." In other words, this was a rescue

mission here. This was an act of God's grace because He's seen the suffering of the Jews, and He wants to stop it. If you think God is only gracious in the New Testament, you're wrong. This is His mercy here.

And when it mentions the affliction of My people, we learned last week, if you remember that, after Abraham died, his grandson Jacob took the people of Israel to Egypt to escape a famine. And while they're there, Exodus 12:40, says they stay in Egypt for 430 years. So that's the timeline of this whole thing. It's about how much time has passed between the previous things we talked about in other weeks. And this week, it's been about four centuries, and in that time, the Jews have gone from a small family to a big one, so big, that the Egyptians are scared of them. They're afraid that they would take over their country, so they want to slow the population down by making them slaves. And when that didn't work, because they still kept growing, they made their slavery harder for them, the book of Exodus says. And when that didn't work, because they still kept growing, they made it harder. And when that didn't work, and so forth and so on, until eventually the Jews called out to God and He heard them and He wants to send Moses.

Remember Moses was raised in the court of Egypt. He was a Jew who grew up around Pharaoh's court. So he knew how to talk to him and interact with him and rub noses with those people. So he was the perfect man for the job. The only problem was, he didn't want to do it at first. The passage goes on to say he gave God several excuses to get out of it. But the Lord says, "Nevertheless, Moses, I'm sending you, because this is not about you, this is about Me. And this is not about your power. This is about my power. And this is not about what you can do. This is about what I can do. So go, and I'll take care of it." Which Moses did because he had faith.

With that said, turn over to the book of Hebrews with me. If you want to go there with me in your Bibles, this is where the book of Hebrews in the Hall of Faith mentions Moses. In Hebrews 11:23 it says,

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith, Moses, when he had grown up refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God.

By faith he left Egypt. By faith, [just reading through some of these here] by faith he kept the Passover. By faith they crossed the Red Sea.

I went through that rather quickly. But if you notice, there is that phrase that's repeated over and over again in here. And it is the phrase "by faith." to tell you that every stage of the journey, either Moses or someone else in his family had faith in God. At every moment, it was the Lord who sustained him. You see it at his birth when his parents believed because it says, "By faith when he was born, his parents hid him," in order to demonstrate that he was not the first one to trust in God, his mom and dad did. And he

wasn't the first person in his family to demonstrate this virtue; they did as well. And then later on it says, "by faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king," which means he left without any concern over what Pharaoh would do to him. He walked out of his presence without fear of the consequences. Another time it says "By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood." But if you notice, the author is not describing every event in Moses' life, he is giving you a summary to show you that Moses could not do anything without the Lord. It was God all the way in his life because the Lord was telling him to do something incredible here. He was ordering this man to go to the most powerful ruler in the world at the time, and free the Jews. Which must have been hard for Moses, because he would have thought, "Well, how could I do that? I'm just a nobody." But the point is that he did it anyway because he understood you don't have to be somebody special in order to serve the Lord, you can be a nobody if you keep your eyes fixed on Him, amen? You need to see yourself as an ordinary man serving an extraordinary God and He will take care of the rest.

One pastor said Moses is an interesting figure in the Bible because he spent the first part of his life thinking he was somebody. He spent the next part of his life learning he was nobody. And then he spent the next part of his life finding out what God could do with a nobody. And the answer is anything. God can do whatever He wants with the nobodies of this world. I mention this because we have a tendency to read a story like this and feel intimidated by it because we think we could never do the things Moses did. There's no way we could ever serve the Lord with such boldness; so this can't apply to us. But the truth is that it does because our God hasn't changed. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. You just need to stop doubting Him all the time and believe it.

I just told you about our church at the beginning of this, but I think this is important for our church as well. Because if you're not careful, it can be easy to let a spirit of cynicism creep into the church and say, "We can never do anything great for God here at Grace Fellowship. We're nobody. We're small. We're weak. We don't have a building. We have a short pastor." Don't say that. But the truth is, that's the wrong way to look at that because the fact is that God can use us to do something specifically for the reason that we are weak. And we are small. We are nothing. God uses the weak things of this world to shame the strong. So if you're weak, you're right where you're supposed to be for God to use

Someone was once telling D.L. Moody. They said, "Pastor Moody, we saw an article in a newspaper that said you have a high-pitched voice, and you're not very fun to listen to, and you've got all these flaws." And Moody smiled and he said, "Yeah, that's my secret. That's why God works in my life." Moses tells us the same story. And that's what we're going to talk about this morning, if you're taking notes, with four phases of Moses faith. So we're going to look at four phases of Moses' faith in this section of Hebrews.

And the first one is the faith of his parents. So the first phase of Moses' faith is the faith of his parents, which means the author starts at Moses' birth, here in order to remind you that God had a hand in his life from the beginning, even before he was born. This is not his faith at the beginning. It's his parent's faith.

But there's a reason it talks about that. If you look in verse 23 it says, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict." Now, if you remember the flow of the chapter here, when it mentions Moses' name, he's the ninth person in the list of the Hall of Faith. So far, the author's talked about several important figures like Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Sarah, and Isaac, and Jacob and Joseph. He's not talking about every Jew; he's not giving you a comprehensive list of names here. He's just highlighting distinct people's lives. And the name, Moses here, it means deliverer or someone who has been delivered. It was a name given to him by Pharaoh's daughter when she saw him floating in the Nile River and delivered him. But the interesting thing about Moses is that here, when it mentions his name, it starts off talking about his parents. If you notice, it says, "By faith Moses," and then it goes into their life, because their faith was a big part of his story.

In order to say some words about them, Exodus 6 says that his parent's names were Amram and Jochebed. Amram was a Levite, and Jochebed was his father's sister, or his biological aunt, which is something that would later be forbidden under the law. The Book of Leviticus says you're not supposed to marry someone close to you like that in your family; but this occurred before the law was written when that was still accepted. Because ever since the days of Adam and Eve, people married their own family members in order to populate the earth. This is just a carryover of that. And after they get married, Hebrews 11 says they had a baby and hid him for three months.

Now, the reason for that is because Pharaoh had given orders at this time to kill all the Hebrew male babies. Exodus 1:15 says, the king of Egypt, spoke to the Hebrew midwives, and he said, "When you're helping the Hebrew women give birth, if it's a son, you shall put him to death. But if it's a daughter, you let her live." And the reason he did that is because again, the people of Israel were growing, and it scared him. The numbers kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger of the family, and it threw him into a panic because he thought they might take over his country. So he told these women to help him stop it by murdering their own people, which they refused to do because the passage in Exodus says they feared God more than the king. It actually says this here in the book of Hebrews, they were not afraid of the king's edict. In fact, when he asked them about it later on, when Pharaoh went to the midwives and questioned them on it, they told him they didn't murder the children because they couldn't get to the babies fast enough. They said the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives can arrive to help them.

And in the same spirit of courage, Hebrews 11 says Moses' parents did a similar thing because verse 23 says they concealed him when he was born because they were not afraid of the king's edict. In other words, they're not being reckless as they did this. They just had a higher authority than Pharaoh because they chose to obey God rather than the king. When the Coronavirus was at its full height some time ago, several people asked me, "Is there ever a time when a believer should defy the government?" And the answer is "Yeah, absolutely." You see it right here because there's times when you know that the government is wrong, and what they're telling you to do is sinful and when that happens, you have no

choice but to put your loyalty with God first. That's what the women are doing. That's what the women did, and that's also what these parents are doing.

When it says they hid him for three months here, some people have wondered why that was. And it could be that the Egyptians searched for the Hebrew babies every three months, so that's why they did that. Could also be that Moses when he turned three months old, he was just too big to hide. So his parents held on to him for as long as they could until it came time to do something else. Because as the story goes on, Exodus 2 says when his mother could hide him no longer she got a wicker basket and covered it over with tar and pitch, then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him. Now when it says his mother put him into a wicker basket, that means she put him into a basket made of papyrus. It's a tall, thin water plant that grows along the banks of the Nile River that could be easily accessible. So that she wouldn't have to go far to pick out the plants, she could just get it while she was working, maybe in the fields or something like that. In fact, this material is so thin, the oldest copies that we have of the New Testament today are written on papyrus because it can be used to make paper. So she took a basket made out of that, and according to verse three, she coated it with tar and pitch, so nothing could get inside and the water wouldn't get in. Which helped, but the problem is, that wouldn't keep everything out of the basket like snakes. I looked it up this week and found the Nile River is home to more than 10 species of venomous snakes, including the Black Mamba, and the Egyptian Cobra who can grow up to eight feet in length. It would be very dangerous for a child. It also wouldn't keep out crocodiles either. The Nile River is home to lots of crocodiles. And the interesting thing about crocodiles is they will attack people. So to say the least, this was not a good situation here. Moses is in peril, which is why his mother's sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

And as she does that, Exodus says, the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile with her maidens walking alongside, and she saw the basket among the reeds, and sent her maid and brought it to her. And she opened it and said, "This is one of the Hebrew babies," and she took him home. Which is not what you would expect, right? I mean, remember, her father had just ordered the execution of every Hebrew male baby. And the Pharaoh had just told the Jewish midwives to kill them. And what does his daughter do right here? She adopts one of them. I would say that's a miracle, wouldn't you? That is the mercy of God. By all accounts, she should have had Moses killed, but she didn't because the Lord had other plans.

And the point of Hebrews here is that all of that happened by faith. The Lord did that and worked through the hearts of Pharaoh's daughter to rescue Moses' life because his parents trusted in God. They didn't know how things would turn out when they did that. They had no idea that God would save Moses this way. How could they? The point is that they did this anyway because they believed. Because when you believe in God, God doesn't want you to know all the answers first. And He doesn't expect you to understand how everything's gonna turn out in the end. He just wants you to be faithful, that's it. He just wants you to obey. I think so many times, we want to make it harder than that. Because we say "I don't

want to do something special for God until I know the future and have an elaborate plan and have a five year strategy and this and that.” But my friends, it doesn't work that way. Sometimes you have to follow Him when you have no idea how things are going to turn out. I mean, Moses’ parents had very little strategy here. In fact, their strategy was pitiful. Take a wicker basket and put it in the Nile River. Coat it with tar and pitch and put your baby in it. That's desperation. But the Lord took that simple act, and He used it to do something amazing because that's what He does.

In fact, if you've read this story before, you'll know it doesn't even end there because Exodus 2 says that even after Pharaoh's daughter found Moses, Moses’ sister, who was watching from the bank of the river, said to her, “Shall I go and call a nurse for you from among the Hebrew women?” And Pharaoh's daughter says yes. And who did she get? She got Moses’ mom. That's smart. So Moses was raised in Pharaoh's daughter's house by none other than his own mother. And the implication there is that she would have taught him about the Lord. She would have told him about the covenant God made with Abraham, and what it means for him. But it all happened simply because of faith. God used his parent’s trust in Him.

And that brings you to another phase of Moses’ faith in his chapter; and that is the faith of his young adulthood. A second phase of Moses’ faith in this chapter is the faith of his young adulthood, which refers to the faith that he had after being raised in the palace. If you read on in verse 24, it says this, it says,

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ great greater riches, than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

Now, as you read that section, and let it kind of marinate in your minds for a moment, you can tell there's a lot in this one. It takes up more room than the previous verse. And that is because this part of the passage covers a longer period in Moses’ life. Because in verse 23, he's just a baby's, just been born. Now all that's changed because verse 24 starts off, “By faith Moses, when he had grown u.” In other words, this is when Moses has grown now.

Now, to put that in perspective, if you just want to write this down, Acts 7 in Stephen’s speech, he says Moses’ life can be divided up into three periods of 40 years each, or thereabouts. He's kind of rounding off probably there. But he spent the first 40 years growing up in the court of Pharaoh, he spent the next 40 years raising sheep in the wilderness, and then he spent the next 40 years going back to Egypt, and leading the people of Israel out of there and into the wilderness. And the point is that when it says here, that “when he had grown up,” this is the first four decades.

And because as he was growing up, his mother was not the only influence in his life, he had other influences too because his life at court would have come with its own set of temptations that are described here in the passage. For one thing, verse 24, says, “As he grew up, he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter.” And that means he was the son of a person of power. He was the adopted child of one of the most prominent women in the world at the time, which would have given him a degree of dignity and respect and honor and probably even fed his pride a little bit. Unlike the Jews who were slaves, Moses' life could not have been any different from his kinsmen. And another temptation that he would have received here, is that he would have had the opportunity to sin, which is what verse 25 refers to when it mentions the passing pleasures of sin because the Egyptians were a sinful people. I just told you how they tried to commit murder by having the Hebrew male babies killed. But that's not all they did because the Egyptians would do human sacrifices. They would murder slaves when a master died; they would have the slaves buried alive inside of his tomb because they thought the slaves had a duty to serve him in the afterlife. They worshiped false gods, indulged in all kinds of indecent behavior, and Moses would have been exposed to that. Now, we don't know how much of that he gave into, but it would have been around him. Verse 26 points out that he would have also been around wealth because it mentions Egypt's treasures. And if you want to know how much treasure Egypt had, I mean, all you have to do is look at things like the tomb of King Tut. Because he was a Pharaoh, who when he died, was buried in a sarcophagus that was made out of 240 pounds of solid gold. But the point here is that even though Moses was privy to all that, by faith, he gave it up for God because he didn't want it.

I mean, it's one thing to have faith. It's another thing to have faith when it costs you something. It's one thing to say you believe, it's another thing to say you believe when you give up all this. That's what Moses did. Verse 24 in its entirety, says, “By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.” And the word “refused” is important because it's a word that means he rejected the offer to be called Pharaoh's daughter. There was a time when he looked at the two options that he had, he had the option of staying with Pharaoh's daughter with all that dignity and honor and then going with Israel who were slaves; and he chose Israel. He picked the nobodies of this world. Verse 25 says he chose rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, rather to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. And that means when Moses sided with Israel, he chose to take on their humble way of life as opposed to the flashy way of life of the Egyptians, or the sinful way of life.

Verse 26 says he consider the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. And when it says he considered the reproaches of Christ, that's a phrase that stumped many scholars because they've wondered well, how could Moses be thinking about Christ at this time? How could a man this far back in the Old Testament be thinking about Jesus because He hasn't come yet, right? It'd be a long time before He showed up. But the idea seems to be that Jesus was Israel's Messiah, He's the one who would come to save them from their sins, so anytime anyone suffered for God's people, it ultimately pointed to Him. So when Moses did this, he was ultimately considering Christ and all he stood for. But the idea here is that in order to be saved, Moses had to make a choice to leave the world behind. He

couldn't have both things. He could hold on to the world and hold on to God. He couldn't cling to his sin and continue to cling to Christ, he had to give one of them up.

As one commentator said, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses enjoyed a position of honor higher than almost anyone else in the world at the time. Because he lived in luxury, he ate the best food, he wore the nicest clothes, he had wealth to buy anything he wanted, or go without working for the rest of his life. But when Moses chose to obey God by faith, he instantly lost it all. Why? Why would anyone want to do that? Why did he make that sacrifice? And verse 26 says because he was looking for his reward. He wanted to go to heaven. Friends, I want to tell you, you can't go to heaven if you don't do what Moses did. You can't be saved if you don't leave this world behind for Christ. You've got to make a decision.

Which brings you to another phase for Moses' faith in this chapter, and that is the faith that he showed when he confronted Pharaoh. The third phase of Moses' faith here in the chapter is the faith that he showed when he confronted Pharaoh which refers to the faith that he had after he grew up and ran away from Egypt, like we just talked about, and then went back to challenge the Pharaoh.

This one will take a little bit of explaining here, but if you look in verse 27, it says, "By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen." And to be honest, in the flow of the passage here, that could be a little confusing when you read it, because it sounds like he's referring to the first time Moses left Egypt, after he grew up there. But it's not, because Exodus 2 says when he did that, when Moses left Egypt the first time, he killed an Egyptian slave master who was beating a Jew. And when Pharaoh heard about it, he went after him. And as a result, Moses ran away, presumably in fear, which means that's not what this is talking about. This is referring to another time when Moses left Pharaoh's presence later on. And that was when he went back to Egypt after being in the wilderness, and told Pharaoh that the Lord said to let my people go, and Pharaoh said, No." So Moses said it again. Pharaoh said no again. And so the Lord started doing the 10 plagues in order to get Pharaoh to change his mind. And right before he did the very last plague, Exodus 10 says,

Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face, you shall die!" Moses said, "You are right; I shall never see your face again!"

And he left without any fear. That's what this is describing because at that point, Moses walked away without worrying about what Pharaoh would do to him. Why would he care about that?

I mean, again, the author of Hebrews is not giving you a detailed account of every aspect of Moses life. He's just giving you highlights. And this one refers to what happened to him after he lived in that desert for a while, and the Lord revealed himself in the burning bush and sent him back to Egypt. Because when he did that, the Bible says Pharaoh wouldn't listen. He ignored him. And so the Lord started doing miracles to get his attention. You can't really talk about the life of Moses without saying a few words

about these miracles because they are so important. Probably the most famous ones come in the form of the 10 plagues. You guys remember that?

And when you study the 10 plagues, you find that each of them corresponds with a god the Egyptian people worshipped. Each of those forms of judgment go back to a specific Egyptian deity to show that God had dominion over them. So when Moses tells Pharaoh, "Let the Jews go free," Pharaoh refused and the plagues come down. This is what would have gone on in the Egyptians mind at the time. Exodus 7 says the plague of blood was the first one done over the Nile River. And the significance to that is that when the Nile River was attacked, the Egyptians would have seen that as an affront on their God Hapi, the god of the Nile River. It would have been like he was being slapped in the face because he couldn't stop the plague. Their God couldn't do what Moses' God did, and they would have known it, it would have been obvious. Then when he did the plague of frogs next, that would have been an affront to the Egyptian goddess Heqt, H-E-Q-T, who had the head of a frog in the body of a woman, because they would have shown that God she couldn't stop Yahweh. There was nothing she could do to stand in His way. The plague of flies would have been an insult to their gods Shu, who was the god of the air. The plague on livestock would have been an affront to Apis, who was found in the shape of a bull. The plague of boils would have been an affront to the goddess Sekhmet, who was the goddess of healing, because when the boils came on their skin, the Egyptians would have called out to that god, and nothing would have happened. The plague on hail would have attacked the god Geb, the deity of the earth, and so forth, and so on.

And if you remember the story, in every one of those plagues, it says that Pharaoh did what? Remember what Pharaoh did. He said, "Okay, I get it now." No, he hardened his heart. Or God hardened it. He became more and more stubborn. When you read the account of that story, you wonder why didn't Pharaoh just let God's people go after the fourth or fifth plague? Why did he wait so long? And the answer is because he didn't want to. He just wanted to plug up his ears and not listen. When the Bible says that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart there, and then Pharaoh hardened his heart, some have wondered what is that referring to? Well, that doesn't mean that Pharaoh wanted to do the right thing, and God wouldn't let him. It means that Pharaoh did not want to do the right thing, he wanted to sin, and so God let him have it. He just removed His hand of mercy and said, "Okay, Pharaoh, if you want to sin go ahead and sin," all the way to the point that it devastated his country.

But the idea here in this verse, in verse 27, is that before that happened, Moses walked out of his presence without any fear before that last plague happened, right in between plague nine and plague ten. Because the verse says that "for he endured." And in the context here, that means that Moses endured the stubbornness of Pharaoh as he hardened his heart over and over again, he persevered while this man sinned. You can imagine that even though the Lord was doing amazing things over Egypt, it would not have been easy for Moses to go to Pharaoh's court and speak to him because he took his life in his hands as he did that. Pharaoh could have him killed, so there might have been times when Moses wanted to despair. But the passage says he didn't despair because it says that he saw Him who is unseen. And that's

an unusual expression because you can't see someone who's unseen. And it's impossible to look at an invisible person. But the meaning is that you can if you look through the eyes of faith, and that's what Moses did. You can see God if you watch through the lens of the soul and trust in Him, and keeping your mind focused on Him instead of getting distracted by other things. And that's what Moses did. This is how you find your ability to endure in life with God. You do it by thinking about Him and not yourself. Can you imagine Moses going to Egypt wondering, "How am I going to do this? What am I going to say? Last time I was in Egypt, I murdered somebody. You're sending me back." And the only way he will get through that is by thinking about the Lord, no other way.

And I don't know about you, but this verse is very meaningful to me on a personal level because I think endurance is one of the hardest things to do as a believer. It's so hard to be patient, isn't it? Anybody else know what I'm talking about? "Lord, give me patience, and give it to me now." That's our prayer. And I mean, it's one thing to be a Christian for a year or two, it's another thing to do it for a decade, that's a whole different issue. And it's one thing to plan a church like we've done here in the beginning, when everyone's excited and pumped up. But it's another thing to do it for 10, or 20, or 30 years, when things get hard; that's when you really got to buckle down and cry out to the Lord. And the author gives you a very good principle for how to persevere in times like that. And that is just to see Him, to remember Him, to dwell on Him because you don't do the work of the ministry or go through the Christian life for any other reason but Him. He's your number one priority. You don't plan a church so people will like you. I mean, people are wonderful, but they're unstable. That's what people are like, here one day, there the next. You shouldn't do it so the numbers will grow. Numbers are unstable. I mean, just because the church is growing numerically doesn't mean that it's doing the right thing spiritually. Some of the fastest growing churches in the country are apostate. You don't do it to appease the culture, culture will never like what we're doing here. The only person you're seeking to please at the end of the day is Christ.

In fact, if you go back to the story of Moses for a moment, there were times when he could relate to this, because there were days when it seemed like nobody liked Moses, not the Egyptians or the Jews. Exodus 5 describes one of them, because there it tells you that right before the plagues started, Moses went to Pharaoh in order to tell him that the Lord said to let my people go. And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I shall obey his voice, I don't know him." And Pharaoh told the Egyptian taskmasters to make Israel's labor harder in the fields by not giving them straw to make brick. And the people came to Moses, and they said, "May the Lord look upon you and judge you for what you did." That's the people he's trying to help. Those are the ones he came to rescue. And they're telling, "It's your fault." Sometimes life can be that way. But even then, it says Moses did not give up because he wasn't looking for their approval ultimately anyway, he was doing it for the Lord's. We have to be the same way. You have to be the same way in your family, there's gonna be times parents, when your kids don't like you very much. You have to be that way in your marriage. There's times when your spouse may not like you very much. You have to be that way as a believer at work giving a Christian testimony. You have to be that way in church. You have to be that way everywhere.

The story is told of a time three kids challenged each other to see who could walk the straightest line through the snow to a tree that was 100 yards away. So they all started walking toward it. And after they finished, one boy's footprints was straight as an arrow while everyone else swerved around; and they asked him, "Why? What did you do?" He said, "I looked at the tree." He said, "You guys were staring at your feet the whole time, but I looked straight ahead at the prize." That's what you do. You look straight ahead to the cross, keep your eyes on Christ alone.

And it brings you to one more phase of Moses' faith here. Just to review these other ones, you have the faith of his parents. You have the faith of his young adulthood. Thirdly, you have the faith that showed up when he confronted Pharaoh. Just to show you how important faith was in his life, faith was just all over his story here. Which brings it to one more phase that's mentioned, and that is the faith he showed at the Exodus.

The fourth phase of Moses faith is the faith he showed if at the Exodus, which refers to the faith he had when he brought the people of Israel out of their slavery. This is something that the whole passage has been kind of building up to, by the way. His faith would go on after that event. It didn't stop there. This is just where this passage comes to a close. But if you look in verse 28, it says,

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

Now, when the author of Hebrews mentioned the Passover and the Red Sea here, that is a reference to the two of the last closing events of the Exodus. Because after doing all these things that we talked about this morning, and being rescued as a baby, and being adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, and turning his back on all of that, and going in the wilderness, only to come back again and tell Pharaoh that the Lord has said to "let My people go," the Lord now tells Moses to do a couple of things. One of them is to keep the Passover, which is mentioned in Exodus chapter 12. So let me just read this to you. Because there it says this, it says,

Now, the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt... speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, "This month, they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their father's households, a lamb for each household... Keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, then the whole assembly of the congregation is to kill it at twilight... Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two door posts on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it... For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast... and the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; 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 there's a lot that can be said about that, but if you notice that event is mentioned in connection with the last of the 10 plagues, when the Lord says that he will strike down all the firstborn in Egypt. That's how the plagues come to an end. You have the plague of blood, you have the plague of flies, and frogs, and lice, and boils, and darkness, and this is the culmination. You can't get any worse than death, can you? I mean, that's the worst. And I just told you how each of these plagues were given to demonstrate God's dominion over the gods of Egypt and show that He was sovereign over them. And as the Lord did that, Pharaoh kept hardening his heart. He wouldn't relent. But one thing I didn't mention is one reason Pharaoh did that is because at this time, he believed he was a god. He thought he was a descendant of the Egyptian god, Horus. So he thought he was in control of everything. Even all the way up to the end, he thought he was the boss. So the Lord does this final plague in order to send a message that "No, you are not because Pharaoh, you can't even take care of your own family. You're not a god; you can't even protect your own firstborn son. And I will demonstrate that by killing him." Pharaoh had tried, actually the previous Pharaoh, because this is several years later, had tried to kill all the sons of the Jews at their birth, remember that? Not just the firstborn, but all the Hebrew male babies. Here, the Lord is saying, "I'm going to do that to your firstborn." Because I'm the one in control; I'm the boss. There's nothing more sobering than this. There's nothing more catastrophic for a nation. Because this meant that if God could kill your firstborn son, he could kill anybody. Nobody's safe.

And in preparation for this event, the verse I just read to you told the people of Israel to take a lamb and kill it and put the blood over the doorposts of their houses. So the Lord would see it and pass by it. And He would look at the blood and keep going, as He went to judge the Egyptians. Because make no mistake, something was going to die that night. Blood was going to be spilled. The Lord just told the Jews to make sure it was going to be a lamb instead of a member of their family. To my knowledge, that's the only time in the plagues God told the Jews to do that. In all the other plagues they were to watch as the Lord worked, but this one they had to actually do something because the Lord would not spare them just because they were Jewish. And He wasn't going to overlook them merely because they were His people. They needed to provide a sacrifice first. It's a good picture of the gospel, isn't it? It's a beautiful illustration of what salvation is like. Because just as the Lord looked at the lamb's blood and passed over the Jews, when we trust in Christ, the Lord looks at Christ's blood, and He does the same thing with us. God won't save you just because you're Canadian. He won't save you just because you're nice. He won't save you just because you're conservative. He saves you through blood. Something has to die. That's Christ. If you want to write this verse down, 1 Corinthians 5:7 says, "For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed." Paul connects this event directly with our Lord.

Which takes you to the next event that happens after this, which is the crossing of the Red Sea. If you look in verse 29, it says, "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned." Now, what that's talking about here is that after the Lord performed the plague of death, the people of Israel were finally released by Pharaoh. After their many years in bondage, the story is over, because when the Lord killed the firstborn

sons, Pharaoh had enough. That broke him. What else are you going to do? So Exodus 12, says that he called Moses and Aaron to him, and he said, "Rise up, go out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel, and they left." The word Exodus means exit, they departed the land. And as they did that, the Bible says they traveled unharassed from Egypt all the way up to the Red Sea, which was quite a ways away. The significance to that is the Red Sea is a body of water that's kind of wide at the bottom and then narrow at the top, but that narrow passageway comes right in between the border of Egypt and the desert of Sinai, where Moses saw the burning bush. See the connection? It takes you back to the place where we started all this, or close to it anyway. Because once the Jews pass through the Red Sea, they're out of Egyptian territory. Now they're in neutral ground. But the problem is they had to stop there because the sea was deep. So they had to wait.

And while they waited, Exodus 14 says Pharaoh changed his mind. It's kind of hard to let go of a free workforce of maybe over a million slaves. So he wanted them back, he took 600 chariots, chased after them. Now the Jews didn't have any chariots; they're slaves. So it'd be something like if you had a gun, and you saw a bunch of tanks coming towards you; it would frighten you. And this is what happened. Let me just read this to you in the entirety of it. Exodus 14 says,

As Pharaoh approached, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were coming after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the Lord. Then they said to Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, Leave us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness!"

But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will perform for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again, ever. The Lord will fight for you, while you keep silent."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. As for you, lift up your staff and reach out with your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. And as for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. Then the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots, and through his horsemen."

Then Moses stretched out with his hand over the sea; and the Lord swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. So the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right and on their left. Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh's

horses, his chariots, and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. But at the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians each said, "Let me flee from Israel, for the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out with your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen." So Moses stretched out with his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained.

That's how the Jews left Egypt, left the control of Egypt. And if you notice the story, on the one hand, it's a fascinating thing, you have the Jews. On the other hand, you have the Egyptians and who wins? Jews. On one side, you have Pharaoh's army. The other side, you have the slaves, who gets the victory.? Slaves. Why? Because of God. It wasn't because the Jews fought for themselves. They didn't. It wasn't because they did something special. They weren't special. They were terrified. Moses even told them to be silent. It was because the Lord stepped in and their defense was all about Him. You know, when it says the Lord swept back the sea so that the waters were like a wall on the right and the left, that means the Lord made a passageway through the Red Sea for them. Probably a tall one because the Red Sea is deep in parts. So the sons of Israel went through it like you would go through a tunnel at the park. And when it says He turned it into dry land, that means He did that to help them so they wouldn't stumble as they walked. Remember, there's a lot of them. There's old and young, weak and strong, kids, elderly; He made it as easy as possible. When it says He threw the Egyptians into a panic, that means He did that to help the Jews as well, because they're scared of them. They're frightened by the soldiers. They've been slaves to these people. But the idea is that God took care of them every step of the way.

The only thing they had to do is believe, which they did in a fickle way, by the way. They said, "It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than die out here." That's not a lot of faith. But the truth is that when the Lord told them to cross, they crossed. When He told them to walk, they did it. They did have faith. Which is a reminder that sometimes the Lord uses things like that. Sometimes He takes our fickle faith and does wonders with it. Jesus said, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can tell this mountain to move from here to there, and it will move." That's what this was. This was mustard seed faith. It wasn't watermelon faith. It wasn't big. But it was there.

I mention that because I know some of you read a story like this. And you say, "This is all great, Pastor Jeremy, but I can't relate to this. I don't have a faith like Moses." Okay. Do you have a faith like the

Jews? Do you trust in God with this much? The Lord can use that. He doesn't want you to stay there. He wants you to be sincere in your faith. He wants you to grow in it. But He took it and used it.

I also tell you that because I know other people who read this and they say, "Well, this doesn't apply because I waver so much in my faith, I'm wishy washy. Well, that's what they were like. These are wishy washy people. But the Lord brought them through the sea. And He can bring you through your struggles today.

In fact, when you compare yourself to all this story here, one thing you learn is that even though they saw a lot of miracles, we've got something better than this. Hebrews 3:3 says Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses. In other words, Jesus is so much greater than him. Jesus didn't just save you from Egypt, He saved you from hell. He doesn't just deliver you from an earthly enemy, He delivers you from an eternal one. He doesn't just rescue you from something like Pharaoh, He rescues you from the wrath of God. The Bible tells us that He lived a perfect life so that He never sinned. And with that perfect life, Christ allowed the Father to take Him to the cross and kill Him there so that all who looked to Him might be saved and have everlasting life and have their sins forgiven, have their debt paid, if they will believe. It all goes back to faith; you have to trust in Him.

You know, in my studies this week, I came across a story of the time Charles Spurgeon was converted. And he says that when that happened, he went to a church where the pastor couldn't make it that day because there was a snowstorm. So he had a layman preach in his place. And the layman didn't have a very good education; he was pretty basic guy. So he preached from Isaiah 45:22, and according to Spurgeon, the sermon went something like this. He said, "My dear friends, this is a very simple text because it says, 'Look on the Lord.' Now looking don't take a lot of pain. It ain't lifting your food or your finger, it's just look. You don't need to go to college to look. You don't need to be smart. You don't have to be strong. You don't have to be powerful. You don't have to be wealthy. You can be the biggest fool and look. A man doesn't need to be worth 1000 pounds a year to look. A child can look. And the text also says 'look unto Me'. Aye," he said, "that's important." I've never said the word "aye" in one of my sermons, but I'll try to get it in there. He said, "Many of you are looking to yourselves; there's no use looking there. Many of you are looking to your earthly comforts; don't look there. Look to Christ." Spurgeon said the man was right. Salvation is about what you look to. Friends, would you look to Christ today? Let me pray that you would and pray the Lord will be glorified. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we do come to You this morning with, in many ways, a weak faith. We struggle with all these things that the Jews struggled with. It's easy to look at them and point fingers and judge and yet You've given us so many more blessings, and yet we often doubt You. We complain and sometimes it's best for us to just to be silent and obey.

Lord, we thank You for this story of such amazing power that You manifested through Your man, Moses. Lord, it just shows us how sovereign You are over the nature. How sovereign You are over

politics. How sovereign You are over things like seas and winds and waves, and it should remind us more than anything else, that we are to trust You. Lord, we pray for Your grace to help us to grow in this.

Father, we often look at things like planting a church or things just like anything, witnessing to our neighbor, forgiving someone, practicing one another's, persevering in the midst of trials, all these things we look at and struggle with. But not if we look to You, God. Thank You for these examples of the way You loved Your people in the Old Testament. It's a reminder of how much You even love people today. Your love has not stopped Your work of rescuing and mercy and deliverance hasn't stopped. It continues every moment. May we rest in that. Father.

May You be glorified Lord. I pray that our church would mature and grow in unity in the years. Father, You've been so gracious to us. There's been so many wonderful testimonies of Christ and His work in the life of Grace Fellowship has been so amazing to see that and I just pray You would continue to work in our lives to draw us closer to Him and not to ourselves. Father, we thank You for the Hall of Faith. It's a reminder to keep persevering and looking to Christ, the One from whom all our hope is found. And may we do that today. In Jesus' name. Amen.