

Hebrews

Overcoming Fear with Faith

Hebrews 11:27-29

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INTRODUCTION:

All Stand and Read Scripture.

Hebrews 11:27-29 (NASB95)

²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. ²⁹ 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.

Prayer

I believe that one of the greatest pressures that we face as Christians is the pressure of one little word F-E-A-R. **FEAR!**

The reason that most Christians are frozen at the mouth and do not readily communicate their faith is because they are afraid. They are afraid of losing their popularity. They are afraid of offending someone or being called a religious fanatic. That is all an **ego** fear! We are afraid that it might destroy the relationship that we have that person and deflate our ego. When, in reality, it strengthens our confidence in God and makes the next opportunity much easier.

Moses did not fear. “**By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king**”. His first decision was to give up the earthly luxuries of Egypt in order to serve God. Then he returned to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and into the promised land.

Imagine the hurt feelings and misunderstanding that must have swept over Pharaoh’s daughter when Moses chose to walk away from everything that she had provided and identify himself with these "slave laborers"! Pharaoh must have been outraged when he heard about it: “How could he leave us after all that we have done for him!” When you choose to follow Jesus Christ, which may involve walking away from the education and comfortable lifestyle that your family has provided for you, you will suffer the pain of alienation and being misunderstood.

As the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, Moses enjoyed a position of honor higher than almost anyone else in Egypt. When he identified himself with the Jewish slaves, he became the object of contempt and scorn. As a family member in Pharaoh’s court, Moses enjoyed whatever pleasures anyone could seek. He lived in luxury. He ate the best food available. He wore the nicest, newest clothes. If he had wanted, he could have enjoyed the pleasures of the most beautiful women in Egypt. He had wealth to buy anything he wanted or to live

without working for the rest of his life. But when Moses chose to obey God by faith, he instantly lost it all!

Pharaoh was angered when Moses killed the Egyptian and sought to kill him. He was very angry when he lost his oldest son and allowed the Israelites to leave. So angry, that even after all of the plagues that had been placed upon his people that he still decided to go after them and attempt to wipe them out. But Moses trusted in God's promises and did not fear Pharaoh.

It is much like Matthew and the rest of the disciples who were called by Jesus to follow Him.

Luke 5:27-28 (NASB95)

²⁷ After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁸ And he left everything behind, and got up and *began* to follow Him.

Matthew literally turned his life upside down and began walking with God. Moses gave up the earthly pleasures and comfort that Egypt had to offer and chose to walk with God. Satan uses fear to neutralize people, but he didn't neutralize Moses.

Proverbs 29:25 (NASB95)

²⁵ The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted.

And, you know, it worked on Abraham. Old Abraham got scared and told a lie about Sarah. Abraham told Abimelech king of Gerar that **Sarah was his sister** out of fear. Abimelech took Sarah into his harem, but God sent him a dream telling him not to touch Sarah because she was Abraham's wife.

Aaron was afraid, and he yielded to the people in the wilderness, and they made a golden calf while Moses was on the mountain with God.

Moses sent out Caleb and spies to spy out the land of Canaan.

Numbers 13:30-33 (NASB95)

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it." ³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us." ³² So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of *great* size. ³³ There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

That is a grasshopper complex.

The disciples were afraid of the storm at the sea but Jesus quieted the waves. Peter was afraid, and he denied Jesus three times.

Fear is a real pressure. And so many Christians melt down at the threat of the loss of social status or popularity. They are afraid people are going to cut them off, look down on

them, call them fanatics, persecute them, or whatever. So Satan uses fear to try to inhibit our faith. But it did not work with Moses.

Let us go back and look at Exodus chapter 5. There we will see how Satan attempted to pressure Moses. But the pressure did not work. He did not fear Pharaoh. It did not matter what Pharaoh did or said. He did not fear him because he had faith in God. It is a great lesson of faith. Listen carefully! Real faith does not fold under worldly pressure. Moses, it says, did not fold in fear because he saw Him who is what? ---**Invisible!** In other words, he **knew** he had an invisible means of support that **could not** be overcome. He knew that no matter what happened, whatever he faced, he would be held up. He would be made strong.

Hebrews 11:1 (NASB95)

11 Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction (or evidence) of things not seen.

It is through God's Word that we learn of God's promises. Although we have never seen God, we are convinced, or truly believe, that He is real by the consistency of His Word. It is through that faith that we have an assured belief that God will deliver on all of His promises.

Romans 10:17 (NASB95)

17 So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

When you shy away from an opportunity to confront people about Jesus Christ, it is because you are afraid. You are afraid because you really do **not trust the power of whom?** God! If you truly trust in the power of God, is there really anything to be afraid of? Of course not! That is **so** ridiculous. If you really believe God, you have nothing to be afraid of. If you are afraid it indicates that you really do not believe in the power of God through you. You have in effect allowed fear to overcome your faith. Faith would say, "I will believe God and reject the world's pressure." But the fearful Christian says, "I don't know if I have the gift to share my faith, I think I will pass on this opportunity." That is the **wrong** decision.

All right. Let's look at Exodus chapter 5.

Exodus 5:1 (NASB95)

5 And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

Now that is pretty bold stuff. He did not worry about this guy. This was just Pharaoh, the chief ruler in all the **world!**

Exodus 5:2 (NASB95)

2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and besides, I will not let Israel go."

Moses tells Pharaoh I just want to take all the children of Israel out of here for a three day rest with God. Do you mind?" Of course, this makes Pharaoh angry! Do you know **who** you are speaking to?

He told Moses and Aaron that they could not take the slaves away from their work. He also decreed that that must now find their own straw to make the bricks and the daily quota for bricks would remain the same.

Well, this kind of pressure could really have scared Moses off. Because, you see, Moses was striving, at this point, to be the leader of Israel. And here he came back, and he started unloading these orders on Pharaoh. And the more he said, the worse it got for Israel. That is a pretty dangerous place for the leader to be in, right? If you want to lead the people, you want them to believe in you. But every time Moses opened his mouth to Pharaoh the conditions got worse for them. But, by faith, Moses was not afraid. He was not afraid of the distrust of his people and he was not afraid of Pharaoh. He believed God, and he spoke what God told him to say.

When the people failed to meet the quota the foremen were beaten. So the foremen came to Moses and said you are messing everything up and making life intolerable for us.

Exodus 5:22-23 (NASB95)

22 Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have You brought harm to this people? Why did You ever send me? 23 Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done harm to this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all."

So, you see, Moses was under a lot of pressure here. It was tough. But he continued to believe God. In chapter 6 Moses continued to avoid fear and did all that God asked him to do. He kept returning to Pharaoh and said, "Let my people go! Let my people go!" And the plagues started, one after the other: the river of blood, the frogs, the gnats, the flies, the death of domestic animals, the boils, the hail and fire, the locust, the darkness, and finally the death of the firstborn. And all through this, Pharaoh remained angry, and Moses never feared him for a moment.

Moses was able to avoid fear because he saw the one who was invisible, one infinitely more powerful than Pharaoh. Moses exhibited his faith by keeping his sights on God rather than on some petty, little Pharaoh trying to flex his muscles in Egypt.

Believe me, when we are afraid of the world and what people will think and say about us, we are exposing ourselves to condemnation.

You must ask the question "Who is our God?" Do we really believe that He can do it? Men of faith have always believed in the invisible God and did not worry about men. Faith rejects the world's prestige, pleasure, plenty, and pressure.

This is the longest introduction I have ever done. Now let's look very briefly at our passage of scripture this morning.

BODY:

I. Faith in God's Plans Overrides Fear.

First of all, faith accepts the **Lord's plans**.

Now, you remember that Pharaoh had put out a decree that all male Hebrew babies were to be killed. And if a family did not do that, they would be susceptible to execution themselves. But the parents of Moses hid him for three months. They were not afraid of

the Pharaoh's decree. They were willing to take the risk that soldiers might find him and they would all lose their lives because they trusted God

You say, "Well, weren't they afraid that the soldiers would find him, and that they would all lose their lives? We are given some insight on the birth of Moses when Stephen was preaching.

Acts 7:20 (NASB95)

²⁰ It was at this time that Moses was born; and he was lovely in the sight of God, and he was nurtured three months in his father's home.

The phrase "**lovely in the sight of God**" in Greek means that God had especially set his affection on their child. I suspect that the family had been told by God, "This child is fair unto me; he is set apart for a specific service." And they knew to hide the child. Thus they were willing to gamble, as it were, from the world's viewpoint, with their own lives to do what God said. And so, without fearing, they took the child, as God had told them to do, and kept the child in the house for three months. And so, by faith, trusting that God would preserve them and the life of little Moses, they hid him in the house three months.

It took a lot of faith to keep that little child. It took a lot of faith to put the little child in a basket and place it in the water and watch it go down the Nile river. But you see what God did? God honored their faith by bringing the little baby right back and giving her the privilege and the joy of nursing and loving and cherishing and raising and teaching the baby Moses. She was the one who taught him the Messianic hope, the promise of Abraham. She was the one who taught him everything that became fulfilled in his life as he led Israel. It took a lot of faith, but she obeyed God's plan even though it seemed very unlikely that the plan could possibly work.

But don't you see how important it was that Moses not only be accepted by Israel, but by Egypt, to make him into the man God wanted him to be? God has a **plan**, and his plan always works right if you obey it.

II. Faith in God's Protection Overrides Fear.

Faith also trusts in God's protection.

Hebrews 11:28 (NASB95)

²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

Remember the last, tenth plague? God told Moses that a death angel was going to pass through the land and all the firstborn of animals and people are going to die. But there is going to be a provision for you. If you will kill a lamb and take the blood and put it on the door posts and on the little crosspiece on the top. When the death angel passes by he will see the blood and pass over you.

And Moses, by faith, believed Him.

The people who believed God put the blood on the doors. Right? That is a beautiful picture of the blood of Jesus Christ. The judgment of God sweeps over mankind and it passes by all those who are covered with the blood of Jesus Christ.

When by faith you receive Jesus Christ, you have applied the blood of Christ. That is why the Bible says...

Romans 8:1 (NASB95)

8 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

III. Faith in God's Promises Overrides Fear.

Faith also trusts God's promises.

Hebrews 11:29 (NASB95)

²⁹ 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.

I am sure that you remember how that happened. That sea just rolled up on both sides and they passed through on dry ground. I am sure that many wondered if the water would stay up there. Can we get this in writing or flash it across the sky?

But Moses told them that God said that it was going to stay parted and they would pass through safely.

They were afraid. But they really did not have a choice. God often prompts your faith, and he prompted their faith by the Egyptian army. They were standing on the edge of the sea and the Egyptians were coming down hot and heavy across the mountains. And it was either stay and get massacred or move on by faith. Do you remember what Moses told them?

Exodus 14:13-14 (NASB95)

¹³ But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent."

CONCLUSION:

You see what faith does? Faith takes God at His word and is victorious. Presumption drowns. The Egyptians presumed, and they drowned. Listen, if you are waiting for a ferry boat to pass through this Christian life, it will never come. If you are waiting for calm water, it will never come. You are going to have to walk through with it all piled up on both sides and believe God that it will stay there. Because the Christian life is a matter of believing God's promise. God says, "I'll hold up everything for you to pass through in this world". Do you believe that? Do you believe anything can fall on the Christian to drown him? I do not think so. That is the choice of faith. It believes God's plans, God's protection, and God's promises. And it rejects whatever the world has to offer.

What a Day That Will Be!