

Faith versus Fear

HVFC

February 22, 2026

Jesus is Better Series

Hebrews 11:23-27

Good morning.

Last week we looked at 3 verses of scripture from Hebrews 11 dealing with our faith being passed on to the next generation and finishing our own journey of faith well.

When or if there are children, we are tasked with influencing them and teaching them about the God we serve. And that deals more with what they observe in us, rather than the words we say. Another way to think of that is are our actions reinforcing the faith we proclaim with our mouth?

We see this a lot, where the parent will bring the kids to church to be taught the “right things” and maybe even have a little faith of their own. Only to walk away from their faith when the kids are grown. Jacob taught us that we must endure to the end and keep the faith if we are to see the promise fulfilled in this life or the next. And this is a struggle and can be difficult, but we must persevere and model living for Jesus to the end. As we do this we teach our kids to know Jesus and can pass the torch of faith on to the next generation. Ultimately this is our goal, and is what the faithful men and women of the church have been doing for 2000 years now. To those of us who are children of God, we owe a debt of gratitude to the previous generations for passing their faith along and enduring to the end.

This morning we are going to be looking at Moses. Moses is the last character the writer talks about in depth before transitioning the idea of faith by the individual to the faith of the nation. Turn with me to Hebrews 11:23.

Moses is a man of two stories. A story of anxiety and stress married to fear and insecurity in his first 40 years of life. And one of learned confidence and trust, marked by a calling to follow God closely, ending as a friend of God in his final 40 years. And sandwich between that is 40 years of living in the wilderness where God took the fearful Moses and changed him to faithful Moses God needed.

Hebrews 11:23-27

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

NKJV

Let's pray.

Moses. A truly larger than life character in both Jewish history and Christian history.

But I find it funny with all that could have been said about him, the writer begins with he was a beautiful baby.

Now as a man... this is both unextraordinary, and interesting.

When babies are born through the first couple weeks, most babies are tiny malnourished prune humans, and while beautiful in their own way, are not “beautiful” to the eye. But to the mother and father of the baby it is as true as the day is long.

And I find it interesting that it was the faith of the parents that keep this baby alive, despite the order from Pharaoh that all male babies should be killed. My heart goes out to all the aborted babies that have been taken before they could impact our world. It is truly a heinous ploy of the enemy to rob life from the womb.

Moses’ parent’s faith and their unwillingness to fear Pharaoh, saved a little prune unattractive baby that was beautiful to them, and God called him to be a figurative Jesus to his generations. And that is the beauty of life.

I want to talk about Moses maybe differently than you have heard him spoken about, and that may make him more human, or easier to relate to.

I believe Exodus gives a picture of a Moses ruled by fear in his first 80 years of life. Moses story starts in Exodus 2 where he placed in the ark in the Nile, and is found by Pharaoh’s daughter. I doubt it was by coincidence on the parent’s part. ((the story of Moses nursed by mom, returned to Pharaoh’s daughter and adopted.))

He would have been educated with the nobility of the land, raised to command men and occupy government appointments.

However, this is all assumed as we don’t have any scripture for this.

Yet the story tells us a couple of things starting in verse 11.

Exodus 2:11-12

11 Many years later, when Moses had grown up, he went out to visit his own people, the Hebrews, and he saw how hard they were forced to work. During his visit, he saw an Egyptian beating one of his fellow Hebrews. 12 After looking in all directions to make sure no one was watching, Moses killed the Egyptian and hid the body in the sand.

NLT

First, Moses knew he was a Hebrew. He went to visit his people.

Second it would assume he has some authority to pull the Egyptian into a secluded place to dispatch of the abuser.

This tells me Moses probably had a rough personal life.

The Hebrews, slaves, saw Moses living a life of luxury in king's palaces and despised him for it. After finding a couple of them fighting, they responded like this.

Exodus 2:14-15

Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"

So Moses feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!"

NKJV

The Egyptians, knowing he wasn't Egyptian, probably despised him and made life difficult for him, including Pharaoh himself.

And this developed a fear in the 40-year-old Moses who was trying to garner likability with his people who despised him, and separate himself from the Egyptians who despised him as a "son" of Pharaoh.

Here are some fears that Moses had that are common to man still to this day.

In Exodus 2 we see he had a fear of men.

This is a common fear today, the fear of what people think about us.

It is called FOPO. Fear of Peoples opinions.

We often will orchestrate our lives in a way to insure we leave the best impression possible. On social media we present a picture as perfect as possible to shape how people think about us. There is something about us that seeks the approval of those around us.

Obviously not everybody struggles with this...

Yet even in small ways we do.

When asked a question in the spur of the moment that may cast us in a bad light, our knee jerk reaction is to tell a lie to protect our image.

It is an expression of the fear of man.

Moses experiences this with the Hebrew men. And I believe it is safe to assume these two who are arguing are the same ones the Egyptian was beating. And Moses thinking he had acted in a way to help his image with them, experiences rejection.

We fight this temptation today in terms of our salvation and identity as Christians.

It is easy to shout I am not ashamed of the Gospel in church, not as easy when it may damage our reputation or standing in other circles of our lives.

Just as Peter did when Jesus was arrested, denying Jesus three times.

A young girl was able to get Peter scared of being identified as a follower of Jesus.

John gives us the root of the problem in John 12:43.

John 12:43

for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

NKJV

In the heat of the moment, to save face, we will decide to gain the praise of men, and seek forgiveness from God later.

We learn to be ashamed of Jesus for worldly gain and advancement. Problem is Jesus says that if you are ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of you before God.

Don't let the fear of men drive you to a place of losing your faith in Jesus and him being ashamed of you before God.

After fleeing Egypt, he ends up in Midian, gets married, taking care of sheep, and 40 later Moses encounters God in the form of a burning bush that is not being consumed.

It is during these 40 years Moses is able to gain his identity and suffered affliction with the people of God in his own way. Going from the palace to a tent in the desert.

Hebrews 11:24-26

24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

NKJV

The burning bush experience is where God calls Moses to go back to Egypt and lead the children of Israel to the promise land.

And here we encounter 5 other fears Moses has. I don't plan to cover them all.

I can speak from experience to this first fear Moses has.

The fear is insecurity or self-doubt.

Exodus 3:11

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

NKJV

If you have been here during the whole process of my family coming to this church and being installed as the pastors, you have witnessed the growth from my very first sermon here, which was in my opinion and several others in this room who expressed it to me, a very poor showing and sermon.

When Pastor Jeff asked us to consider pastoring, I had served under both my father and father-in-law's pastorship, and understood pastoring as one does that has read the instructions without ever doing the task. So as a man, I was extremely confident in my ability to "pastor".

Until Pastor Jeff began asking me to assume some of the responsibility, and not succeeding like I thought I should, a ton of self-doubt bricks landed on my shoulders.

Self-doubt is a fear that is plaguing our generation.

Our phones and isolated "social media" life shows us perfection without giving proper context of time, effort, and energy to accomplish desires, leading us to believe that something is wrong with us.

Self-doubt is a produce of turning inward when we fail.

We blast ourselves with the most vehement negative talk, saying things that are not true. Unfortunately, we are our own worst enemies.

And over time we begin to stop doing the things we are called to do because we feel like all we do is fail.

I love how God deals with this in Moses' life.

Exodus 3:12

He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

NKJV

God tells Moses, you will know I called you to do this when you go to Egypt and return to this mountain and worship me.

We want to ask God for a sign, a fleece, folded in an octagon, now floating, a tax rebate of 10K dollars, the sky to be green.

I find the more I don't want to do the task the more absurd the request is. It is like people who say I am not setting my alarm clock tonight, and if God wants me to go to work tomorrow, he will wake me up. And just to put it to the test, stays up until after midnight.

God will often call us to do something in our life, and tell us to be obedient to what I am asking of you, and when you accomplish the task you will know this is what you were called to do.

And here I stand 3 years into pastoring, and I know without a shadow of a doubt this is where God called me to be, doing what he has called me to do.

Paul tells us in Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Moses goes on to say, what if the Israelites reject me again, the fear of rejection is still there.

He also let's fear drive him to offer the excuse of being too busy, please just send somebody else, it is too much for me.

James teaches us, those who know to do a good thing and does not do it, to that one it is a sin.

In closing I want to touch on one more fear.

The fear of not being qualified.

Moses tells God, I am slow of speech, I am not qualified, I can't do this.

We have all witnessed a small child being told to pick up some toys and put them in the box. And after picking up one, throws a tantrum. I can't do this, this is too much, tears, whining, excuse after excuse.

This is Moses, and to be honest us.

God will often call us to take on something we have no way of accomplishing on our own.

For just a moment, can you put yourself in Moses's shoes and try to mentally prepare to take several million people enslaved to the most powerful and richest nation in the world, and lead them to freedom and into the promise land.

One man, leading a people that has already rejected him, from a nation he has already fled for his life from, with nothing but a wood stick.

Not one person in this room would say, You know what God, yea, yea, I think I am ready and willing to take this calling.

Just like Moses we are quick to offer to God every valid and invalid reason we can't respond in faith because of the fear we fight within our heart.

I will pick back up with Moses next week, but we struggle with fear and faith.

They are opposing forces. Fear believes in failure, but faith trusts God to lead us to success.

Hebrews 11:27

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

NKJV

Moses who lived in fear for 80 years, finds God and reluctantly puts his faith in Him, starts walking back to Egypt and with a powerful display of God's power fulfills the calling God gave him.

You will never accomplish anything for God operating from a place of fear.

Faith allowed Moses to endure every hardship and to return to the mountain and worship God.

Stand with me.

Moses battled fear, just like we do. I just took a few examples this morning, fear of people, fear of rejection, fear of being unqualified.

For 80 years fear defined Moses. But one encounter with God changed everything.

Hebrews says that when Moses returns to Egypt he was a different man. He forsook Egypt, no longer fearing Pharaoh, but endured as seeing him who is invisible.

Moses no longer regarded Pharaoh, he stopped looking at himself. Rather he set his eyes on the invisible God.

Fear says you can't.

Faith says God can.

Moses returned to that mountain and worshipped. The promise was fulfilled.

God was with Moses. God is with you. Same God.

We will always fight fear, so the question is not whether you feel afraid, the question is will you walk by faith despite your fear?

Let's pray.