

Choose Purpose!
Hebrews 11:23-28

We make decisions every day. Some are minor decisions, others are medium decisions, others are massive decisions that carry a great deal of weight. We've all made decisions we wish we didn't make, some we're glad we did make, and some we wish we could take back because it was just a bad choice.

When it comes to living by faith, it will involve choices. You will have to choose who you are going to believe and who you are going to obey. Who are you going to follow based on that belief? You're going to have to make a choice, and that is where we find Moses and his choices of faith in Hebrews 11:23-28.

“By faith Moses’ parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict.” Hebrews 11:23

The author of Hebrews is talking about the time when Moses was born, the Pharaoh had become afraid because the number of Hebrews children born outnumbered the Egyptians, so he made an edict that all the male children under two were to be killed. Amram, his father, and Jochebed, his mother, made a decision in spite of the law of the land about the killing of the kids that because their child was a beautiful child, they were not going to be afraid of the king's edict. They made their decision about Moses by faith. Moses was born into a faith-filled home. If you want your children to have faith, they need to see faith. The decisions of a faith-filled home didn't show up when his momma and daddy were at church, it showed up when the laws of the land were against their family structure. It tells us the king made an edict, but it also says they were not terrified by the king's edict.

Acts 7:20-22 repeats this description, *“At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for by his family. When he was placed outside, Pharaoh’s daughter took him and brought him up as her own son. Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.”* What did his mother see? His potential? His promise? Was this a faith thing? There was already something powerful about Moses’ life. What she saw was God's perception of the child. He was lovely in God's sight. The parents looked at baby Moses, and because it was a faith-filled family, they said, *“God has a purpose for this child.”* They were saying, *“God thinks highly of this child.”* They chose to believe God's plan for their children in spite of what the culture was saying, doing, and legalizing.

They said, *“In spite of how bad the culture is, God has a plan for this pregnancy. God has a plan for this birth, and we're not going to be afraid about how bad it is out there, because we know Who we believe in.”* So, Moses was born into a faith environment.

Moses’ parents put their baby boy in a little basket on the Nile River. Pharaoh's daughter saw it, and she knew he was a Hebrew. How did Pharaoh's daughter, seeing a new baby in a basket, know he was a Hebrew? Because the boy was circumcised. Only the Jews circumcised their boys, the Egyptians didn't circumcise their sons. Jewish boys were circumcised on the eighth day. Circumcision was a sign that said, *“I belong to God and I'm under God's rule. I'm under God's covenant.”*

- There’s A Current And There Is A Culture To Our World

The current takes you in a direction. There is a natural drift to life. By definition, to drift means “a continuous slow movement from one place to another, to float passively.” It is the picture of a sailing vessel that has been cut loose from its moorings, so it's floating, and it's just being carried along with the current or with the wind. It has no control of its own destiny. It has lost its ability to chart its own course.

- It is so easy to become drifters!

It happens so quickly and naturally. It often takes us unaware. It's simply the natural process that occurs when we lose our bearings and stop moving in the right direction. And one thing is sure, it rarely happens because we intend for it to. We drift toward normal and average. We drift toward conforming to the world. There is a natural drift from God.

- We don't drift in good directions.

In life, everybody winds up somewhere – only a few people wind up somewhere on purpose!" And let there be no mistake, success is a place you go "on purpose!"

In the Movie, "Alice in Wonderland," Alice encounters a Cheshire Cat. Seeking direction, she magically engages the cat in conversation and asks him which way she should go. The cat asks her where she wants to go. She tells him it really does not matter. He replies, "Then it really does not matter which way you go."

If an airplane taking off in New York headed for Tel Aviv Israel drifts off course just one degree north for the duration of the flight, it will land in Saint Petersburg (Moscow) Russia, 1,644 miles off course. You see, it is not good enough to simply plot the course and be engaged in the journey. Why? Because there is this little thing called the jet stream that is constantly pushing against the airplane trying to push it off course.

- You Need A Guide, And You Need To Listen To The Guide

You need someone in life who knows what's around the corner. In our lives, there are constant threats. The best way to get through the rapids of life is to listen to our Guide, the Lord, rather than doing it our way. The rafting guides will give you instructions before you ever begin and tell you exactly what to do while on the river. You must pay attention to them, or you will not be safe. If you cannot listen, rafting (or life) will be a very difficult event.

God is our ultimate guide, and you need God in such a way that you will "*Do exceeding abundantly more than you can imagine.*" (Ephesians 3:20) Don't just drift through the rapids and life.

Go write a great story. Psalmist David said, "*All the days ordained for my life were written in your book before one of them came to be.*" Psalm 139:16

- Don't let someone else write your story.

God has a plan for your life. It's His story and you're His creation. He has instilled within you the giftings for such a time as this to fulfill that plan.

God wants us to say, "I want to make a difference, in a place that makes a difference, in a time that makes a difference." The world would need Moses to lead through seasons of stress and difficulty to help people experience a better future than their present circumstances. Go change your world! The Bible says over and over again that God is our Guide:

"For this God is our God forever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end." Psalms 48:14

Follow the Guide. Listen to His voice. He will get us safely home. Decisions keep you from drifting. Today's decisions create tomorrow's experiences. Decisions, not intentions, determine your destination. Most of the time, the outcome of our decision won't be felt until later. Much later. The paths you choose in your twenties as a single person impact what happens to you in your thirties when you're married with kids. We don't know the outcome of many decisions we make until it's too late to do anything about it. Regardless of the outcome, one thing is certain: We cannot go back in time to reset the clock and recapture those years. We live as if there is no connection between today's choices and tomorrow's experiences.

In the story of Moses, Miriam, Moses's big sister, ran along the bank and saw the daughter of Pharaoh pick it up and take it home. She said to the daughter of Pharaoh, "Do you need a nursemaid to help you take care of him?" Jochebed applies for the job, and she's hired by Pharaoh's daughter, so she is getting paid to raise her own baby. You will never

discover what God can do until you trust Him to do it, and He can do it in unbelievable ways when He sees your faith.

1. You Have To Choose an Identity—I Must Decide Who I Am!

“By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.” Hebrews 11:24

Moses had to decide who he was. He had to answer the question, “Do I continue to pretend I am the son of Pharaoh’s daughter?” Or “Do I admit my Jewish roots and return and live with the slaves?”

A lot of stress in life is caused by trying to be someone we are not! He refuses to live a lie and makes a decision that will affect the rest of his life. He chose God’s plan for his life.

“He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.” Hebrews 11:25

Biblical faith chooses not only God's plan over the culture's pull, it chooses God's priorities. Why did it take Moses 40 years to make this decision? Because he was caught between two worlds. Acts 7 says his mother nurtured him, so his mother was whispering in his ear, “You belong to God. You're not an Egyptian, you are Hebrew. You're part of God's divine covenant to Israel.”

But then he also had the daughter of Pharaoh saying, “I want to make you into the smartest, the richest, the most powerful man in the world. I have so much in store for you.”

For 40 years, Moses is being told different ideas by two different mothers. He's being pulled in two different ways, and it took him to the age 40 to get right. But at the age of 40, it says he made a choice, and he refused. “I will no longer be known as an Egyptian, I will now be known for who I truly am. I belong to the people of God.”

2. I Must Accept Responsibility For My Life.

I must stop making excuses, stop blaming other people, and stop seeing myself as a victim.

“He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.” Hebrews 11:25

Two facts of life:

- I Can’t Blame Other People For The Direction In My Life.
- No One Can Ruin Your Life Without Your Permission.

“So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.” Romans 14:12

I cannot live off other people’s spiritual commitments. Faith demands a choice. Moses made a choice. Many of us have not made the choice. You're still dancing between two realities. Maybe you have been ridiculed because your faith governs your decisions.

“rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.” Hebrews 11:25

The Hebrew writer tells you two things about sin. First of all, he says, “Sin is fun.” But he says a second thing about sin. He says, “Sin is fun, it's also seasonal.” He called it the *fleeting pleasures of sin*, it's seasonal.

He made a decision that it's a lot of fun being the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and if I go over here and hang out with God's way, God's Word, and God's people, I will be ill-treated like they are. I looked at the pros, I looked at the cons, and Moses at age 40 says, “I have decided that I am no longer going to be identified with Pharaoh's daughter as the heir apparent to the throne of Egypt. I have now decided at 40 years old, I am going to cast my lot, whatever the

repercussions are, with the people of God.”

When your faith informs your decisions, there are some things you can't do because you're a follower of Christ.

3. I Must Decide What Is Important in My Life.

“He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.” Hebrews 11:26

“Regarded” means a value judgment. It means to think it through carefully. What am I going to live for? Moses was able to walk away from wrong and all the riches of Egypt because his values were right. Our world chooses fame, power, popularity, and fortune. God's purpose is more valuable than popularity. Naive people overlook the fact that every path has a destination.

“Without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances.” Proverbs 11:14

The question is, “Why make that decision if I know I'll get mistreated, ridiculed, and scorned? If I know that there could be negative repercussions, why risk it?” In verse 26 he says, *“Considering the disgrace.”* Disgrace means “the shame, the reproach, the criticism.” To associate with Jesus Christ in your faith, you must understand that it will bring with it some shame. That is, shame of rejection like Jesus was rejected.

“He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, he was looking to the reward.” There was a motivation factor here, it wasn't just that he was so spiritual. He thought this thing through, and what he discovered was the payoff with Christ is better than the payoff with the world, and he calls it “his reward.”

What do you get a reward for? You get a reward for something you do. Something you do rewards you. You get a reward at work, or a reward for winning a race, you get a reward because of a performance of some kind. He said, “If I do this thing right, even though I'm really starting it full time at 40, I'm going to wind up richer than I would if I just settle for what the world has to offer me in Egypt.” So, the question is, “What's the reward?” Your first thought may be heaven, and heaven definitely is a reward, because the Bible says He's going to reward us for our faithfulness down here.

Who's raising him? His mother. Who's whispering in his ear? His mother. His mother is telling him generations ago, “Our forefather named Abraham, lived for God, and God told your forefather Abraham that He is going to build a land and a nation, and He's going to give a promised land, and this promised land is going to be for His people, and God is going to lead His people into the promised land.” His mother said, “The reason why God let you get this education in this secular environment and be raised by Egypt, is because He wants you to lead them out of there and into the Promised Land.”

In Acts chapter 7, when Stephen is reviewing Moses's history, he says, *“And Moses, knowing that God had called him to deliver Israel.”* So, when Moses's mother was telling him about God's plan for his life, she said, “God transferred that covenant from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob, and we just transferred it to you.”

God wants you to do this. He wants to do it with you, through you, and for you. You are going to be lead a whole nation. Don't settle for Egypt and miss out on the reward of God's promise.

You can fall in love with the world and miss out on God's plan for your life. You can fall so in love with the secular society that you can die with money in the bank, your name on a big plaque, with a big house and a nice care, and a wasted life, because you never experienced God's plan. You and I can be too in love with Egypt to make the decision that the reward of God is greater than the treasures of men.

There's nothing wrong with having the car, the house, or the job, or the money in and of itself, unless you had to give

up God to get it. Unless you had to hide your faith to get it. He says that he made the decision, and he made the decision because he knew that it was going to be worth it.

4. I Must Decide Who Is In Charge of My Life.

“By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.” Hebrews 11:25

He had faith in choosing God's presence.

Moses made a graphic mistake. He killed an Egyptian outside of God's will. The reason you need to know that is because most of us have made mistakes. He blew it, and operated independently of God, and had to run for his life. So, on the one hand, he refused, that was the good side. On the other hand, he was presumptuous, that was the bad side. So, he had a good and a bad thing, working both, but in both he was trying to do God's will. It says in Acts 7, he thought that the folks would look at him as their deliverer. So, he's trying to do good, but he winds up doing bad even though he made the commitment.

This imperfect man, saw what was unseen. He saw something we couldn't see. At the burning bush, he saw “Him” who you can't see. He saw God. But in verse 27 it says, *“He saw him.”* Don’t miss this, *“He persevered.”* There was a gap between his refusal and his seeing, and the gap between his refusal to his seeing was endurance. How long did he endure? Forty years. It took him 40 years to live out the decision, and he had to go through a 40-year process of enduring before he got to see the unseen.

Go back to the story in the Book of Exodus. Moses is leading the sheep, and it says while he was leading his sheep in the mountain of God. He's leading his sheep in an environment where God is. While leading his sheep in an environment where God is, he looks up and he sees a bush on fire that's not being consumed. When he turned aside to see the bush that would not burn, a voice came from outside of the bush, saying, *“Moses, take off your shoes. You're on holy ground.”* Exodus 3:5

Why do I have to take off my shoes? Because right now there is a gap between the bottom of your foot and the ground, so you're too high. That one half inch sole right there has got you too elevated. Take off your shoes and touch the dirt, because right now the creature is in front of the Creator. He gets a personal word from God after he's refused to be an Egyptian, after he's endured, he gets a personal word from God. What's the personal word from God? He says, “I want you go tell Pharaoh to let My people go. Now is the time for Me to give you a special word with your name on it, because I have a special purpose, because you've gone through the process to make yourself available to Me.”

When God creates a situation in your life that doesn't make sense like a burning bush, don't try to figure it out. You're not supposed to, you're just supposed to get as close to it as you can so you can hear when God starts calling your name, even though it makes absolutely no sense.

“By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.” Hebrews 11:28

This is the Passover. This is the event that they would never forget. God said, “I'm going to kill every firstborn in every home of the Egyptians, and every firstborn animal who belongs to any Egyptian. I'm going to send the death angel.” Moses told the people to paint the blood of a lamb on the door so when the death angel sees the blood, He will pass over you. He's going to skip you. Those of us who accept Christ are going to heaven, because when God looks at me and you, He sees the blood of Jesus. We've accepted the blood of Jesus Christ as our sin bearer and now have a passport to heaven.

When you have a passport, that gives you entrance into another country. My passport is the blood of Jesus Christ that gives me entrance into eternal life. It ought to be your passport too, and if you don't have a passport, you can receive one today. If you come to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of eternal life, your passport is

stamped by His blood, and entrance to heaven is guaranteed. The question today is, “What are you going to choose? Will you choose the risk of faith?” The answer is Jesus Christ is worth putting your faith in!