

Hebrews 11

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 March 2012

Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

- [0 : 0 0] And verse 24, Hebrews 11, verse 24, By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.
- He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. As we know, Moses was one of the greatest men ever.
- And biblically ignorant, though we are nationally, I suppose, today by and large, there aren't many people who've never heard of Moses.
- He's one of these characters who has come with us generation by generation. Moses was unique in many ways.
- One of the, I suppose, one of the great or the great thing about Moses was his humility. He was known for his meekness. God said that of him.
- [1 : 1 4] And that is part of what made him so great. Because Moses was never in anything for himself. Anything that he did, he was never in it for his own name, for his own honor, for his own glory.
- And he's an example to every single believer, every single Christian. Because whatever we do, we must never do it for our own praise, if it's to and for the Lord.
- Because always, there has to be looking to the Lord. In all that we do, in all the different areas and aspects of life, but particularly when we are involved in any service.
- And at a certain extent, all of our life is service. But when we're looking at a specific service to and for the Lord. This is part of Moses' great, the secret of his greatness.
- That he never, ever, ever wanted the praise for himself. He never did anything so that he himself would be elevated.
- [2 : 1 9] In fact, I think the high point of Moses' greatness, when he was saying to the Lord, don't blot Israel. Don't blot them.
- Don't blot them out. Don't turn your back on them. Blot me out of the book rather than them. It was an extraordinary moment. Where he just put himself as absolutely nothing.
- That's what God is looking for. And sometimes God has to break us in order to become more and more like that. And I would say that when we are in any work for the Lord, that it is often with a sense of trembling and with a sense of fear and a sense of inadequacy.
- If you find somebody saying, well, right, Lord, I think I'm the person, you'd have to say to yourself, well, I'm not too sure. Because you look at all the people that the Lord has used to you, looks at the likes of your Jeremiah, and he was saying to the Lord, I'm just like a child.
- You look at Isaiah, and he would say, Lord, I'm a man of unclean lips. You look at Moses as God was calling Moses at the burning bush, and Moses is saying, no, no, not me.
- [3 : 4 3] I'll send my brother. I'm not eloquent. I'm not a good speaker. The people won't listen to me. Not me. And there is often this sense of inadequacy.

But we must never, ever, ever use our sense of inadequacy as an excuse for not doing. The Lord won't accept our excuses.

Because it is often, as the Bible says, in fear and in much trembling. But the Lord will give the grace. And at the end of the day, the Lord is going to require of all of us and say, right, what did you do for me?

I asked you to do this. I laid it upon your heart to do that. Did you do it? No. What if the Lord is saying that to us? Because so often we can pull back and we'll say, ah, maybe there's somebody here today.

I don't know. And you're holding back, say, for instance, from professing that the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior. You're holding back because of fear, because of this, because of that.

[4 : 53] You might have a hundred excuses or one main excuse. And the Lord says, I'm not really listening to that. You may live with that excuse, believe that excuse, and be ready to die with that excuse.

But the Lord is saying no. So we've got to face up and we've got to go forward and do what the Lord asks us to do.

Whether we're full of fear or trembling, we've still got to do. I know what that's all about. And I am where I am by God's grace and God's grace alone. But we must never shy away because of how we feel or because of our own inabilities or our own sense of inadequacy.

If so, nothing would ever get done for the church. And that's one of the great things that's taught us by the life of Moses. He was a man who felt himself nothing.

And yet it was in that nothingness that God used him so mightily. Now, of course, what made Moses great was his faith as well because that's what we have here.

[5 : 59] By faith, Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. By faith. Of course, we come to faith by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.

And may I say to anybody in here who's wrestling about all these things, at one level, you know, before you come to faith, it can all seem so complicated. And it's all so blurred.

And there might be people here today and that's who you are. It all seems, as you hear about this way of salvation, and it all seems so confusing and so blurred. And you say, yes, I would like to become a Christian, but I just can't figure it out.

Well, let me say, I understand that. And I'm sure that many of the Christians in here today can understand that, that there was a time and a place where you also couldn't quite figure it out.

But, you know, that's what the Lord is able to do, is help you to figure it out and help you to see and help you to lay hold because that's what faith is.

[7 : 09] it's just accepting Jesus for who He is and what He says. It's believing in Him and taking Him and saying, right, Lord, here am I. I'm, I can't work this out myself.

I can't do this. It's coming into a personal relationship and union with Him so that He is, He is here. So that by, it's at the very beginning there it says about faith, faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith brings what is, in a sense, you can't see to become so real as if it's here with you. You're so convinced of it, it is a conviction so that the reality of the Lord in your life is as real as the person sitting beside you.

Of course, it's by faith you see Him, but you can see Him all the same by faith and you know it's true. And as we were saying to the young people today, once we have that faith, we have it forever.

It cannot be taken from us. However, in our day-to-day living, we can have great faith and we can have weak faith. Our faith can soar and it can, as it were, weaken.

[8 : 26] Because sometimes the Lord would say to His people, O ye of little faith. He said that to His disciples and they were men of faith. And He said to them, right now, you've just got little faith.

Other times, He will say, I haven't seen such great faith. No, not in all Israel. And so, it would appear that our faith sometimes can soar and sometimes it can sink.

Just like Peter, his faith was great when he went out of the boat. But when he began to sink, his faith had begun to sink before he did. And that's how it is as we journey through life.

So that we need to have a faith exercised so that we will live by faith. Now, it tells us here that by faith, Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Now, we remember the story of how at that particular time in Egypt, there was a period of infant genocide. It was an awful time to be an Israelite in Egypt.

[9 : 34] And Pharaoh and the Egyptians had become afraid because of the development and the growth of the Israelite. And they were afraid that eventually they would take over the land.

And so, Pharaoh had decreed that there was going to be this putting to death of the infant. And it was a fearful time. And then he put, of course, he put all the Israelites into slavery.

So, it was a time of great distress and pain and anguish in Israel. And, of course, when baby Moses was born, the law decreed that little baby Moses would be put to death.

Now, of course, as parents, rightly so, which is the natural instinct of any parent, is that of survival, survival of their child. And so, they hid Moses in this little basket down by the river.

And we know that in the wonderful providence of God, one day, Pharaoh's daughter came down by the riverside.

[10 : 39] Now, they didn't leave baby Moses all on his own in that, as it were, that little basket. Miriam, Moses' older sister, was standing in the rushes watching in case anything would happen.

And she saw Pharaoh's daughter and her attendants coming. And, of course, Pharaoh's daughter saw the little baby and her heart went out to the little baby, recognizing him as a little Israelite baby.

And as we know what happened, she says, I'm going to have, I'm going to take this baby, I'm going to bring this baby up as my own. At that moment, she, as it were, adopted Moses as her own. Now, of course, as you know, there's a lot of work in little babies.

It's a full-time job. And I'm sure Pharaoh's daughter says that, I'm going to have this little baby boy as my own. And Miriam came forward at that moment seeing that the heart of Pharaoh's daughter had gone out to little baby Moses and she said to her, maybe you would like a nurse to look after the baby.

And, of course, the baby, she was saying, baby will be yours, but this nurse will attend to all its needs. And Pharaoh's daughter said, wonderful, yes. And, of course, it's one of these incidents, and they're so often you find them in the Bible, it actually brings a smile to your face at the way that God works things.

[12 : 02] And Miriam, of course, went running home and got her mum and her mother was brought into the employment of the Pharaoh. It's quite extraordinary. And, of course, there wasn't a safer baby, as it were, in the whole world at that moment than little baby Moses.

Although he was under the authority and the condemnation of death, yet he was brought and saved, and he was now under, because Pharaoh's daughter, he was guaranteed life.

But the important thing for Moses was that he was being brought up by his natural mother. And she was able to teach him in these early, impressionable years.

And these things would never go. Train up a child in the way that he'll go. And, you know, it doesn't matter. These years are so important because you instill into them what's important and the values in life.

And so, this is what little Moses had. Now, of course, when Moses got older, he went to live in the palace. And, of course, when he went to the palace, it couldn't have been more different.

[13 : 19] We're not talking here about the environment from his own little home, whatever, however difficult that would be in Israel, into the splendor and the glory of an Egyptian palace.

It would have been quite mind-blowing. The extremes would have been just, it's from A to Z as extreme and as wide as that. But also, the whole culture, the philosophy, and particularly the spirit of the day because it was a totally pagan society.

And the Egyptians did not worship the living and through God. So, the whole emphasis where Moses went was one of idolatry and the whole ethos was so far removed from the learning and the teaching that he had.

But God had purposes for Moses going into the palace because Moses now went in to a place of learning. And Moses would have learned because who knows one day it is possible in the natural course of events that Moses would one day come onto the throne in Egypt.

Humanly speaking, that was a possibility. As it was running out, it probably wasn't going to happen, but it could have, humanly speaking.

[14 : 39] So, Moses would have been given the best teaching in the world in literature, in military expertise, in all kinds of leadership and in authority and in ruling.

See what God's doing? Unknown to Moses, unknown to anybody at that particular time, God is training Moses for future leadership because he is going to be the one who is leading spiritually and in every other way Israel for 40 years through the wilderness, a great nation.

It's wonderful the way that God works, often in ways that Moses had not the faintest idea at that time or anybody what this was all about. But of course, what we read here is there came a particular point in Moses' life, a crisis point.

And there are always crisis points in our lives. There came one day a crisis point in Moses' life where he had to make a decision. He had to make a decision as to whose side he was on.

Was he going to stay loyal, faithful to the Egyptian way, to the rule, to their society, to their God? Or was he going to throw in his lot with his own natural people, with the Israelites who, remember, were in slavery, who were in bondage, who had no rights.

[16 : 14] They were in a terrible state. But God, the living and through God, was their God. So that was the dilemma and the decision that Moses one day was going to have to make.

And there was a crisis point came. And we're told here that by faith, Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

So on the one hand, he had to renounce. On the one hand, he had to refuse. That was part of that decision. There was a pushing away away on the one side and there was a taking hold off on the other, where he chose to be mistreated with the people of God.

And that's what faith does. Faith will take us. Faith will take us in a particular direction. And there has to come a parting of the ways where we're going to have to make a choice in this world.

Abraham, we read about that a little earlier on here as we read through Hebrews chapter 11, Abraham had to do that one day. God called him.

[17 : 33] And in that calling, Abraham had to leave where he was. He had to leave his home. He had to leave everything that was familiar with him and go out as God called him.

The apostle Paul had to do that. Paul had things that people in this world would have paid dearly for. He was at what we would call a religious level.

He was right up there at the very top. And in that particular society, that counted for so much. He walked away from it all. It meant nothing to him.

Jesus Christ meant everything. And so it was here for Moses. Now, Moses, we've got to remember, was one of the, at that stage, was a prince in Egypt and was one of the most powerful men, even as a prince in Egypt, one of the most powerful men in the world.

He could snap his fingers and he could have whatever he wanted. Moses could have the most expensive and probably did the most expensive clothing, the most beautiful women, the fastest chariots, the most beautiful houses.

[18 : 38] He could have had all the trappings of life. And don't get me wrong, being a Christian is not about these things, having or not having. Don't get me wrong, that is not what it's about.

A person can be a Christian and have the most expensive clothes and can have the fastest car and have all these things. Don't get me wrong, if we ever think for one moment that Christianity is whether you have these things or you don't have these things, not at all.

Some of the most, there are many people in this world who have nothing and they don't have the Lord either, so we mustn't think these things. However, what we're seeing here is that Moses was in a place of privilege, in a society that was godless, in the very heart of the place that was opposed to God.

And in that particular place and in that particular position, he had everything as far as his world could give. But even all these privileges, not for one moment did it sway Moses.

He said no. When the choice came, he turned his back upon everything. It would be very easy for Moses to argue again from a human point of view and say, oh, this wouldn't be right on my mother or my adopted mother.

[20 : 06] When I think of all she's done for me and taken me from slavery, protected me and given me all these privileges, I can't walk away from her. And yet, when the choice came, he had to.

There was nothing in this world, this is what Moses learned, nothing in this world was to take priority over God. God first. And when that day came, that's what he had to do.

Anything else had to take second, third, fourth, fifth, whatever. It was the Lord first. My friend, have you come to that place or point in your life where you realize that it's God first?

I believe God's speaking to people in here and maybe, maybe yourselves that you have your own particular place and point and you're saying to yourself, I really have to sort this out. are there idols holding you back?

And remember, the idols of today, they're legitimate things, they're right things in their own place. But don't let them take you away from God.

[21 : 16] Put God first. Remember what the Lord says, seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things will be added to you. God says, I look after the other things for you.

Don't let that hold you back from me. And so Moses came to this point where he saw, no, everything else has to go.

There's only one thing. I'm throwing my lot in with God. And this is what was so challenging for Moses, was at that particular time, the people of God were suppressed.

They were being put to death. You see, in many ways, it would be so much easier for Moses if at that particular time, Israel and Egypt were on an even level playing field, as it were.

And that Israel, as they had previously had in Egypt all the privileges, in fact, initially when they came to Egypt, they got the best of the land. They were looked upon as great people because of what Joseph had done.

[22 : 18] Joseph had saved the Egyptians. And so, Israel were given an elevated place in society. If it were these days, you would say to yourself, well, Moses, your choice in many ways wouldn't be that so difficult, siding with the people of God or siding with the Egyptians.

But now, at this particular time, it's totally different. They are the ones being mistreated. And do you know, to a certain extent, it's still the same today.

Because the people of God are often still mistreated. The world has a hatred, there's a deep-rooted hatred of Christ in the world. Sometimes we get shocked, sometimes I get shocked by it, and I say, that's so unfair.

Sometimes some of the things that we see in society, and we see Christians suffering and losing out because of their faith, and there's this sense of injustice, and we say, well, if it was any other religion, this wouldn't be happening.

But because they're Christians, that's why they're happening. Yes, exactly. It's because they're Christians, that's why they're happening. Jesus said, the world hates me, and it will hate you as well.

[23 : 32] And somebody's got to remember that. And that's why. You see, the gospel of Jesus Christ is an offense to the human heart.

Why? Because it strips us of any worth or value ourselves where we can say before God, God, I am good enough.

The gospel says we've all sinned and come short of the glory of God. And the gospel says you need another to get right with God. God.

And that goes against the grain. It goes against human pride. And so, this is part of what's the very heartbeat of the world's animosity.

Because logically speaking, you would say to yourself, if there's any creed or belief or system in this world, that the world should, you would say, the world should like and enjoy, it should be the Christian faith.

[24 : 41] In the very same way as when you looked at Jesus, you would say, well, if there's any person who ever walked this world who should have been treated well by society, it was Jesus.

Because he never did anything to them but good. Everywhere he went, he healed, he helped, he taught, he nursed, he cared, he showed compassion, what did they do?

They couldn't stand him, they nailed him to a cross. In the most brutal, barbaric way possible. The only person since the fall that ever walked in this world sinless and the world couldn't stand him.

It's extraordinary. Logic goes out the window and it can only show us one thing, the perverseness of the human heart. Where men, the Bible says this, is called good evil and evil good.

So that is why there is still to this day opposition to the Christian faith. And that means sometimes for you and for me throwing in your lot just like Moses did long ago, it may mean that life is going to become more uncomfortable for you.

[25 : 52] It might not, but it might. And that means that we are not to even think about these things. we have to put the Lord first.

Because we look ahead. That's what Moses was doing. And he was saying, yeah, there's treasures in Egypt, but there's even greater treasures in heaven. My father's house there are many mansions.

That's what Jesus said. There is an inheritance undefiled that fadeth not away. We served in heaven for you where there are pleasures forevermore.

at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. The glory that is to be. And that's what Moses was seeing. He was seeing beyond. You know, there's all those in heaven today if they had the opportunity of coming back, not one of them would.

Because of the glory and the wonder. Every moment we live in a world that even the good times is always clouded by mists of uncertainty and there's always pains and sorrows.

[26 : 54] Unfortunately, it's part and partial of life. Even although life can be so good in many ways, sometimes it's hurtful and sore. But in glory there will be never anything to threaten or hurt or mar or spoil.

And that's what Moses was seeing. I hope today that's what you're seeing and that like Moses, you today are choosing to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin considering the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt.

Let us pray. Lord, our God, we give thanks for all that we have and all that we receive and help us all to make this choice.

Lord, we have to confess that there are days and times where we're not choosing the way that we should. We do not live sometimes like those who have made that choice.

And yet, Lord, we also have to say that it is a choice above all that we want to make and that this is the direction we want to be going in.

[28 : 09] And it is the direction that we are going in. But, oh, Lord, help us then to walk in this way, to walk in a right way. Have mercy upon us all. Take us all home safely, we pray.

Grant us grace every step of the way. Forgive us in Jesus' name. Amen.