

# Choose Today And Dedicate Yourself to The Lord

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Alright, take your Bible if you would and go with me to Exodus chapter 32.

Exodus chapter 32. I am not convinced that we will finish this chapter tonight. We've had a lot of things going on, that's why I went ahead and canceled the song.

But there are like three major messages in the chapter that I'm trying to get strung together. But if you'll scan the chapter with me, we'll at least work through the first point if you would.

The Bible says in Exodus chapter 32, you know, Moses has gone up in the mount and he's there to get the Ten Commandments. And he's going to come down. And while he's gone, Aaron is there and all the people, they begin to notice that Moses is gone.

And in verse 1, they don't know where he is. They don't know what's happened. They said, we want not what has become of him. We don't know what happened to Moses. He went up in the mountain and he doesn't come down. And so Aaron said, well, y'all go break off all your golden earrings and all these other things and bring them to me.

[ 1 : 06 ] And he took them and he made a golden calf. He melted it down and made a calf. In verse 5, he builds an altar to it. And the next day they make a feast.

This is probably the most sickening statement in the chapter. Look at verse 5. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, tomorrow is a feast to the Lord.

Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord. He's going to make a feast to the God of heaven who hates idols and images. But he's going to do that and called it a feast to the Lord.

In verse 7, God tells Moses they have corrupted themselves. I wish you to underline in verse 8. All this is just as we would read through it. In verse 8, I wish you to underline this is the real strong, in my opinion, definition of sin that will cover it all.

Look what they did in verse 8. They turned aside out of the way. They turned aside out of the way. It is easy for you to think, in your mind, I don't cuss, smoke, drink, dance, and go with them that do.

[ 2 : 18 ] And so I don't sin. But really, sin is getting out of his way and into your way. Sin is not doing what he wants and doing what you want. That's sin. And that's what they did in the chapter.

And by the way, the Bible says that in Isaiah 53. When it says that they have all turned to their own way. And in Romans chapter 3, when it talks about sin, it says they have turned every man to his own way.

Verse 9, God said, these are a stiff-necked people. They're stubborn. They're rebellious. They're cantankerous. And in verse 10, God says, I won't kill them and I'll make you a great nation.

And so Moses prays and says, please don't do that. And so he comes down with the two tablets in his hand. And these tablets in verse 16 were the work of God.

The writing was of the writing of God, graven upon tablets. Let me just stop here and say something. That's impossible to believe. God took some rocks, formed some tablets and wrote on them.

[ 3 : 23 ] If you have a problem believing the creation, you've probably got a problem believing that one. But if you believe God can make a world in six days, ain't no big deal for him to write on some tablets. Amen?

Now, I happen to believe that God wrote those words. Moses didn't go up there and chisel them out. God didn't dictate them. My Bible reads there, and I just think somewhere along the way, you've got to get a hold of this.

You can't explain the Bible. You just accept it. Amen? And in verse 16, it says, the tablets were the, would you read those three words to me? The tablets were the what? The work. And the writing was the writing of?

Whoa. The writing was the writing of God, and it was graven upon the tables. Graven upon the tables. And if you will look at chapter 31 and verse 18, which we just finished, you'll find out he wrote them with his finger.

So they're the writing of God. He wrote them. And so they came down, and Moses said to Aaron, what in the world is going on, buddy?

[ 4 : 29 ] What in the world? You are my brother. You have been with me in all this. You've watched God do all this great stuff. And Aaron said, well, it ain't my fault. It's a wicked bunch you left me in charge of.

They are set on mischief. That's the way pastors do it. Amen? I'm sure you, since we've got a lot of the mysteries here, you heard the story about the new pastor.

And when he got there, the old pastor said, look, I wrote you three notes, and I left them in the desk. And he said, so whenever you get over the honeymoon and you get discouraged, I want you to open the first letter and read it.

And so after about two years, the church was kind of used to him. He opened the first one, and he read it, and it said, blame everything on the previous pastor. So he got up and blamed everything on the previous pastor.

And the people were very happy, and they realized he's right. It was the last pastor. And then he said, but when you get far enough, you'll need the second letter. And after things started going downhill again, he opened the second letter and it said, blame it all on the deacons.

[ 5 : 33 ] So he blamed it all on the deacons, and everybody got really happy again. And when they got discouraged again, he opened that third letter, and it just said, time for you to write three notes. Because it's always somebody else, amen?

It's always somebody else. So they're set on mischief. And it's really funny how God's got this tremendous sense of humor because he's really the one that wrote Exodus, you know?

I mean, he had a scribe write it. He had Moses write it, and Moses wrote it in his words. But every word God saw to it that it would come out the words that he wanted in the book. And he said, I just threw all that gold in the pot, and the next thing I know, a calf came out.

Look at it. There came out this calf. I love that. Verse 26, this is like the most horrible part. It's where I would have gone. I don't think we can get there tonight. But Moses has now taken the calf, and he's ground the calf up, and he's put it in the water, and he's made the guys drink the water.

And then Moses tells everybody, he says, in verse 26, who's on the Lord's side? And he said, if you're on the Lord's side, I want you to put your sword on your side. Look at verse 27. In verse 27, he said, unto them, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay, kill your brother.

[ 6 : 52 ] Every man his friend, his companion, and every man his neighbor. You want to talk about horrific. They've come down from the mountain. They've ground up the calf.

They've had to drink the water with the burnt, nasty, ground-up gold in it. And now, he says, take your sword, and go kill your brother, your companion, and your neighbor.

And in verse 29, he said, consecrate yourself to the Lord. Consecrate yourself to the Lord. Somewhere along the way, you have to choose. Do I run with them that make fun of God? Do I run with them that don't take things seriously?

Or what do I do? They had to take a stand. And the Levites did that. And in verse 30, he said to the people, you have sinned a great sin. You have sinned a great sin.

In verse 31, again. Father, I pray tonight that you would help our church. And Lord, I pray that this first point might be seriously taken by the laymen, the members that are going to stay here in our church.

[ 7 : 59 ] I pray that the staff would take it seriously. Those of us who live here. Lord, for us that are members of the church that don't plan on going to the mission field, I pray you'd help us to make this real.

And I pray you'd touch our hearts with it. And I'll give you praise for it all in Jesus' name. Amen. I want to talk to you first about a great leadership failure. A great leadership failure.

Look if you would at verse 1. Moses has not come down. He is the regular leader. The Bible says that when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Up, make us gods which shall go before us.

As for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we want not what has become of him. I'd like to talk to you just a minute. I really want to talk to, let's just forget the missionaries are here tonight.

I really want to talk to the deacons and the deacons in training. I want to talk to the men of our church. I want to talk to the lay people of our church. I think there is a tremendously strong message here for every Christian and especially for those in a church.

[ 9 : 08 ] Moses is still up in the mount with God. Aaron knows God in a very special way. I want you to think back over the story. We're going to read some verses about it. Do you realize who Aaron is?

If anybody ought to know God, I mean he is as close to getting close to God as you can get. God may be talking to Moses, but Moses and Aaron, they got this, they're brothers and they're in it together and everywhere they go.

I'm just going to be blunt and speak my heart as an old man preacher. Someday I won't be here and someday this church will go on without me and someday this chapter is going to be very real.

I'm not Moses, but I am the pastor and I am the founding pastor and that puts us in an unusual situation. Aaron knows God in a special way. He has seen God do some great things.

What could have caused Aaron to fail this way? I want you to think with me just a minute. The old man Moses is out of the way. Aaron's in charge. They go in less than 40 days.

[ 10 : 13 ] They go from being great people of God to making a false God, an idol, and worshipping it and calling that idol the Lord.

Tomorrow we will worship the Lord. Before the story is over, they will be naked dancing and singing and praising and worshipping a false God.

And I think there are great lessons here for every church that we can take. So I just want to ask you to think through them with me. I'd like to help you understand maybe what I think might have happened in Aaron's life.

And it could be happening in your life. The first thing is, I believe there was kind of an indirect relationship with the Lord. I wish you'd write that one down somewhere in the Margie Bible. Indirect relationship with the Lord.

And I'm afraid you get that sometimes. I'm afraid you come and your Sunday school teacher is in touch with God and your pastor is in touch with God and other people are in touch with God. Or maybe you're the wife and your husband is in touch with God.

[ 11 : 16 ] Or maybe you're the kid and your parents are in touch with God. But you're not really working on that in touch with God thing. I don't know. But I think that might be what made Aaron be such an idiot.

Because in this story, he's a classic idiot. If you think he's an idiot, say amen. I mean, I can't help it. I threw the gold in there and the calf came out. You'd have to be on the three stooges to talk like that.

I mean, you've got to be stupid to talk like that. You've got to be stupid. He's a guy that can throw his stick down and have it turn into a snake and grab it. He's a guy that can raise his rod and big stuff happen.

And they come up and say, we want something new. And he says, okay, whatever you want. So look if you would with me. He's got an indirect relationship. You're probably thinking, what do you mean by that? So look at Exodus 4.14, if you would.

In Exodus 4.14, God gets mad at Moses because Moses keeps saying, I can't talk. I can't do the job you've called me to do. It's beyond me to do what you want me to do. Which is stupid because if God wants you to do something, it can't be beyond you.

[ 12 : 18 ] Can you say amen there? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. He said, is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know he can speak well. Also behold, he comes forth to meet you. And when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

Verse 15. Now listen, this is the indirect relationship. And thou shalt speak unto him and put words in his mouth. And I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth and will teach you what you shall do.

Verse 16. He shall be thy spokesman unto the people and he shall be even. He shall be to thee instead of a mouth. Thou shalt be to him instead of God.

That's like the craziest verses in the Bible. Moses, you don't trust me. So I get a guy to do the talking for you.

You'll just tell him what I said to say. So if you can imagine, they're over here and they're getting ready to do something. And Moses goes, well, you want him to throw the rod down? Okay. Hey. He said throw the rod down and say this.

[ 13 : 20 ] Boom. All right. Okay. And it was an indirect relationship. He got it from God and you say that's not what the Bible says. Okay. Let's see what the Bible said.

It looked like this. Exodus chapter 4 and verse 29. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto.

Help me. What's it say? Unto Moses. And did the signs in the sight of the people. That's Exodus 4.29. Look at Exodus chapter 7 and verse 2.

And thou shalt speak all that I command thee. And Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh that he send the children of Israel out of his land. They walk in to speak to Pharaoh. Do you understand what's happening?

They walk in to speak to Pharaoh. And Aaron's doing all the talking. And Moses is whispering in the walkie-talkie. Tell him this. He's got an earpiece. That's what it says.

[ 14 : 22 ] I think you can read that there. Verse 19. Exodus chapter 7 and verse 19. And the Lord spake unto Moses. Say unto Aaron. The Lord spake unto Moses.

Say unto Aaron. You ought to underline that. The Lord spake unto Moses. Say unto Aaron. Take thy rod. Stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt. On the streams and the rivers and the ponds and on the pools of water.

That they may become blood. That there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt. Both in the vessels of wood and in the vessels of stone. First thing I'd like to ask you to think about. Could it be that Aaron does such a stupid thing because he didn't have that personal relationship?

And I can't prove this. But I really think that may be what's going on. And it makes me think of you coming to church. You haven't opened your Bible all week long. You haven't spent any time in prayer.

You haven't dealt with God on your own. You're not studying and praying and growing. And you come up here and I regurgitate hours that I spend with the Lord. And I share with you what it says. Then you walk into a Sunday school class on Sunday morning.

[ 15 : 24 ] And a Sunday school teacher regurgitates to you the word of God. And boy you're lucky you've got such a good Sunday school teacher. But I think it could be a big problem. Because you don't need somebody else eating your food for you.

If we went to a restaurant tonight and I said look guys let's go. I will eat your meal and then I'll regurgitate. And you can eat it after I eat it. You would all be like that's gross.

We're not going. I'd like to go to Fogo at a Chow. I could eat all of your meat. And spit it back out for you to eat it. You say that's ridiculous. But you're doing it spiritually. We fall almost into the trap of the Catholics who got somebody else to talk to God for them.

And you're like somebody pray for me. I don't know if that had anything to do with it or not. You can go home and meditate on it. I'll be more than happy for you to teach me I'm wrong. Could it be that Aaron got his leadership from Moses?

And now Moses was gone. And Aaron had not been thinking for himself. Aaron wasn't receiving directly from the Lord. Aaron depended on the strength of another man when he should have depended on the Lord.

[ 16 : 32 ] Could it be that old Aaron stood up and said, Okay, what do you want me to say? Got it. What do you want me to do? Got it. As long as you're here, we're okay.

Got it. You're not here? I've got to think for myself? Uh-oh. It happens if kids get married and leave their home and they don't do what they ought to do because they've been living on mom and daddy's faith.

It happens when you go to church and you've got some big, powerful preacher who you've just got this enormous amount of respect for and you do what he says instead of doing your own walk with God.

So I'd like to ask you some questions. I'll get really to the church in a minute. Where are you in your walk with the Lord? Do you look to certain men too much? I wish you'd answer that question.

Do you look to certain men too much? I have been preaching since I was 15 and I will be 60 in just a few days. And I will tell you, what's that add up to?

[ 17 : 31 ] 45 years. I've watched so many people when a preacher messed up or their daddy messed up or a brother messed up, they quit on God because they were looking too much to a man.

Do you look too much at your parents, your friends, or your pastor? Do you follow the lead of others instead of developing your own walk? With the Lord. I happen to be listening to a John Maxwell book right now on Audible.

And John Maxwell said that when he was a boy, his daddy said, five frogs sat on a log. Four thought about it and jumped off. How many are still on the log? And John Maxwell said, as a boy, he said, well, daddy, there's one on the log.

He said, no. He said, he just went with the rest of them. He didn't think about it. He just did what they did. Is that what you do? Whatever the four do, that's what you do. You don't think. You don't pray.

You don't seek God. You don't think for yourself. Don't let commentaries do your thinking. Let me share that one's for you. How about that? Some of you, you even picked the wrong commentaries.

[ 18 : 32 ] And then you let them do your thinking. Do not let preachers, no matter how famous they are, do your thinking. Do not allow your culture or your family to tell you what to think. I came to an age in my own personal life when I looked at it and I said, my mom and dad have been very good Christians and they've had me in church all my life.

I was a young guy. I was about 15 and I decided that from then on I would never believe anything my mother and my daddy said. I don't know why you homeschool parents just swallowed your chewing gum. But I really decided I will not believe what mom and dad believe.

I will go search it out for myself. Well, it took me forever to come to the conclusion that you didn't have to be baptized to be saved. I could have gone to my daddy and it would have gone like this.

Dad, do you have to be baptized to be saved? He said, no, that's a dumb question. Okay, got it. But when I got through my study, I was like, I know you don't have to be. I figured it out.

It's in the book. I studied it. I had great trouble deciding whether or not you ought to speak in tongues. The tongues movement had just come in. It was taken to churches by storm, including all the Southern Baptist churches which I happened to be growing up in.

[ 19 : 40 ] And it took me years to figure it out. But I figured it out. Study for yourself. Study for yourself. You say, well, that tongue is moving in that big. Well, that Calvinism movement won't be that big either.

So just hang on to your britches. Don't allow your culture. Get into the Bible. Do you have a daily walk with the Lord? Lord, can you stand alone for the things of God?

Let me remind you of verse 1 one more time. When they lost Moses, they lost all direction. So I want to talk to our church briefly. And I will be through in just a second. You will get out on time.

They lost Moses and they lost all direction. Verse 1, it says again, And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together under Aaron and said unto them, Up, make us gods which shall go before us.

For as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we want not what has become of him. There's a thousand things I'd like to say that I want. But no man brought him up out of the land of Egypt.

[ 20 : 46 ] Can I get an amen on that? No man brought him up. And they knew better. Moses didn't give, he didn't try to take credit. Not one part of the Bible makes it sound like I did it. But sometimes you look at men too much.

And they said to Aaron, up, make us gods. If I'd have been Aaron, I'd have been like, Moses didn't bring you. If you're going to say amen, at least me and Moses did it. It was me and my rod. Me and my rod standing up there with Moses.

Two of us. Don't leave me out. But that isn't what happens. So can I talk to our church a minute? Our church needs strong men that know how to walk with God. Vision needs strong men that know how to walk with God.

Vision needs men that will keep our church in the Bible and following Jesus. So Austin Gardner drops dead of a heart attack. Don't anybody come up here and say, Trent, you and Robert, get up real quick and make us a god.

We need a new god. We know not what happened to him. And so we're going to get us a god. You say, well, that's stupid. Is it? I can show you Independent Baptist Church. After Independent Baptist Church across America, the pastor's gone and the church dies and everybody leaves.

[ 21 : 52 ] And nobody's got enough courage to stand up and say, wait a minute, pastor. We don't build gods around here. You ain't one and we ain't building one. Say, man. You can get mad, but it's the truth. Pastors come and pastors go.

But this is your church. There's no way I can live the next hundred years. I just don't think I got it in me. I'd be 160. I got a feeling none of y'all will be around there anyway.

So it don't matter. Maybe Brother Frick. But nobody else is going to make it. Nobody else is going to make it. But pastors come and pastors go. And you and your kids and your grandkids, this church ought to stay on because it's strong in the word of God.

And we know what's right. If your pastor steps out of line, then you should not run from your responsibility. If your pastor steps out of line, that's me right now, you should not run from your responsibility.

Can him. Can me. By the way, if it comes out, I'm going to run off 50. Y'all can run me off. It's a lot easier to run one off than 50. Say, man. I know most independent Baptists never heard that.

[ 23 : 05 ] But I think that's what goes on in this chapter. Do not go get the wrong man to lead you when the pastor steps away. Don't get the wrong man to lead you when the pastor steps away.

Aaron foolishly tries to please the people. It's another big problem here. It's a lonely thing sometimes to say, no, we're taking this stand. We're going to preach the Bible like this.

And we're going to support missions like this. And not even your own church might agree with it. And so when Moses steps out of the way, the congregation comes up and they say, we've taken a poll. And this is how we want to do things.

Aaron wanted to establish his own leadership. He wants the people to respect him. He wants the people to like him. He probably had no idea what to do. So he scrambles to make up a ministry philosophy in the absence of a man that really knows God and his will.

So in verse 2, I mean, it doesn't even seem to take him a lot of verses to figure out what to do. In verse 1, we don't know what to do. In verse 2, Aaron says, good, bring me your earrings.

[ 24 : 10 ] I'm like, could you at least have a committee meeting? Could you at least got the deacons together and said, guys, how do you all feel about doing this? Aaron said in verse 2, break off the golden earrings.

Verse 4, he received them at the hand and fashioned it. And then he came out. The man of God, the guy with the rod, said, these be thy God, so Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

I'd hate to admit that. If that's the case, Aaron, you've been serving a demon. Aaron simply put the true name of the real God on an idiotic idol.

In verse 5, he said, tomorrow is a feast to the Lord. So here's some big truths for you to take home tonight. Our leaders can fail us.

Our leaders can fail us. Your husband could quit on you, by the way, and do something wrong. But, ma'am, you ought to stand for Jesus no matter what happens. Your wife could do wrong, but you stand for Jesus.

[ 25 : 10 ] Your parents could do wrong, but you stand for Jesus. Your pastor could do wrong. They could step off the scene. They can fail to lead when their voice is needed. They can die. They can fall into sin. We must make sure that our leadership works at keeping a walk with God.

This church ought to always remind people, including me. By the way, I'm not trying to get you to do this for people to follow me. You need to do it with me. Austin, stay close to God, buddy.

You say, he doesn't need to hear that. Oh, yeah, he does. He is but a man and not a good one at that. And that's what's going on here. Because I think Aaron was a good guy.

How many of y'all think Aaron's a pretty good guy? Say amen. I think Aaron's a good guy. I mean, I'm giving him a real bad time right now. I believe old Aaron's a pretty good guy. He's just stupid. But then I'm stupid.

We have to get our pastors to constantly develop in their personal life. It's good to get your pastoral leadership to places they can be refreshed spiritually.

[ 26 : 10 ] They need their batteries charged occasionally also. But here's my big point for the night. And I'll be through. We need strong lay leadership in our church.

Which kind of goes against the grain of independent Baptist churches. Because we really like strong pastors and weak people. I think what should have happened when Moses left, if Aaron had stepped out and said, I've been thinking, I'm not sure, what about us making an idol?

It sure would have been a good thing if about 50 or 70 men in charge of that nation would have just walked up and said, Are you kidding us? If you're not read Exodus 20, we're already past that.

We don't make idols. So if you can't lead, step out of the way. We'll get a man that can until Moses gets here. The missionaries and those that we send out are great.

But the strength of this church will never be those that we send out. You need to hear that again. That was written on Monday, by the way. The strength of this church will never be those that we send out.

[ 27 : 15 ] Nor will it be our pastor. The strength of this church will be strong men and women. Men and women that love God and can live and act like the spiritual family we're all sent out to be.

We need leadership that tries to please God and never the people. A politician probably ought to please you a little bit. But the leadership in the church of God ought to say, I'm sorry, we're just not into it.

We've got to pick one. You are God and you don't make the cut. So deacons in our church will try to please God. Sunday school teachers in our church will try to please God. And pastoral staff in our church will try to please God.

We don't need a new and constantly changing ministry philosophy. We were given a Bible. So let's just stick to it. So you preach it verse by verse, chapter by chapter.



It would be pretty hard not to see what it says. So I'm finished. That was only point one. I don't have to study for the next time I preach. Next Thursday night is covered. But let me just say this to you very quickly.

[ 28 : 18 ] Moses is going up in the mountain. He's with God. I mean, they can't hang around 40 days and wait. He'll be down. They can't wait. I don't know how many days have actually gone by here.

Are we on day 29? Are we on day 39? I'm not really sure that the Bible is all that clear about when it is that they start making the golden calf. But while they're still partying, he gets down. Were they able to throw it in the microwave and whoop out a calf real quick or did it take a couple of days?

I'm not sure. But I do know this. I pray to God that you lay people. I'm trying my best to look at you lay people and not our missionaries. I pray to God that Vision Baptist missionaries can know 25 years from now, back home, there's a church that stands like the rock of Gibraltar.

That knows the truth, holds the truth, preaches the truth, still loves Jesus. I'm not talking about whether or not you get black walls. That is obviously not the issue. I'm not talking about what the building looks like.

I am talking about we preach the book. We stand for Jesus. We still believe in the creation. Amen. I don't care how many famous Presbyterians deny it. We'll still believe it. We are going to stick with what the book says.

[ 29 : 29 ] If you think that's basically all right, say amen. By the way, if it's not, we need to talk to me. And I'll go back to my office right now and await your discussion. Father, I love you and I thank you for the chance to serve you.

I thank you for your wonderful people. I pray you magnify yourself and I give you all praise in Jesus' name. Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.