

# Hebrews 11.23-26

## Moses: Choices and the Cost of Faith

### The Summit Church, Hebrews 11 | Faith

*MPT: Living by faith involves a choice—choosing to obey and fear God over everything else in life.*

*MPS: Faith values God's plans, priorities, and prize over everything else in this world...even when it's risky, involves suffering, and when nobody else sees it.*

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### READ LOCALLY AT CAMPUS

<sup>23</sup>By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. <sup>24</sup>By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup>choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup>He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

### INTRODUCTION

If you haven't already, Hebrews 11. We've been in this series looking at different examples of faith. Today I wanna speak to you **from the life of Moses** about **faith and choices**.

In 1920 the Boston Red Sox made the choice to sell one of their up and coming stars to the NY Yankees. After joining the Yankees, that star would **single handedly hit more homeruns than the entire Red Sox team for 10 of the next 12 seasons**. The star's name: *Sultan of Swat; King of Crash; Colossus of Clout; Babe Ruth*. . . THE GREAT

**BAMBINO!** (If you don't know that reference, you don't deserve Summer.)

In 2010, a man named Laszlo Hanyecz became the first person to use Bitcoin in a commercial transaction when he made the choice to buy **two pizzas with 10k BTC**. That BTC would be worth almost \$700M today (he could buy around 65M pizzas for that much).

We all know how Apple was founded by Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak...but there was actually a third co-founder named Ronald Wayne. However, you've never heard of Ronald because in 1976 he made the choice to **sell his 10% stake in the company for a mere \$800**. . . today 10% of Apple would be worth around \$350 billion.

All these folks **made choices based on what they believed something was worth**. See, **all of our choices are actually value statements**:

- This morning you **made the choice** to come to church—on your day off you chose to set an alarm, get up, get ready and come to church because you believed the value of **coming** was greater than the value of **sleeping in**.
- After this you're gonna **make a choice** about what to eat for lunch—some of you will choose to value your **taste buds** while others will value your **health**.
- Some of you are **trying to choose** whether you'll stay in your current job—valuing **stability** and the **known**—or take a leap of faith on a new one that could be the breakthrough you've been hoping for in your career.

**Every decision you make is a value statement**, and the value you assign determines the price we're willing to pay for it.

- That price may be **financial** or it could be paid for in **time**. It might be paid for in a **sacrifice**. Or maybe some of your choices have been paid for in **regret**.
- **Every choice we make is a value statement...and over time our accumulation of choices reveals what we truly value.**

As we continue on in Hebrews 11, today we're gonna look at the early life of Moses and see some of the **choices he and his parents made, what it said about their values, and the cost they were willing to pay for it.**

## CONTEXT

To understand the gravity of Moses's faith in Hebrews 11, there's a few things we need to know about the world Moses was born into—**flip on back to Exodus 1**. We left off last week with Jacob blessing Joseph's two sons. Joseph goes on to **thrive and prosper in Egypt**, but then look at Exodus 1: **Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.**

**Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. . .**

**Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."**

At this point in the story, it's been about 400 years since the death of Joseph, and the Jews in Egypt had fallen from being a **privileged people under the leadership of Joseph** down to a **group of despised slaves under Pharaoh**.

- They were great in number, but they were living in oppression.

**Then Exodus 2 opens up with the birth of a baby boy named Moses** (it actually says baby Moses was "beautiful, fine, and special" which is hilarious cuz **Moses is the one who wrote Exodus**—*"Man, I was a good looking baby"*). That's the context Moses is being born into.

Now flip back to Hebrews 11. The original audience for the book of Hebrews would've been anxiously awaiting this moment, to hear of the **faith of Moses**, the guy who is **arguably the largest figure in the history of Israel**. To this audience...

- Moses was the guy God used to **set his people free** from slavery in Egypt.
- Moses was the guy who **led them to the Promised Land** previously told to Abraham.
- Moses was the guy who **gave them the Law** which helped define who they were as a people.
- Moses is the **only guy in history who got to see God's glory** with his own two eyes!
- Moses is the guy called "**the most humble man** who has ever lived."<sup>1</sup>
- Moses is the guy who **wrote the first five books** of the Bible!

All of that to say, by the time we get to Hebrews 11 and the Great Hall of the Faith, the audience is itching to hear about their hero Moses; he's the main attraction. Knowing that, the Author, using the **same**

<sup>1</sup> Numbers 12:3

formula that's gotten him this far in Hebrews 11 ("BY FAITH Abel; Noah; Abraham; Sarah; Jacob...") takes a deep breath, and with much anticipation writes, <sup>23</sup>By faith Moses, ... *doesn't do anything, cuz he's just a baby!* . . . when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents... This is about as much of a letdown as a NC firework. In fact, 'by faith Moses' has something done for him in which he has absolutely no control over.

- <sup>23</sup>By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. . . the edict we just read about—to kill all Hebrew baby boys.
- The first example of Moses's faith isn't actually about his faith at all...it's about the faith of his parents.

## THE FAITH OF HIS PARENTS

By faith, Baby Moses was kept hidden for three months because his parents feared God more than they feared Pharaoh.

An obvious question is, "If they weren't afraid, then why hide baby Moses? Why not put him in the stroller and take him up to the playground like all the other parents?"

- Prov 1:7, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."
  - Here's the operating principle: Faith always works together with wisdom.
- By faith they didn't fear the King's edict...but by wisdom they chose to hide baby Moses so they all wouldn't be killed.
- By faith working with wisdom, Moses's parents made a choice to hide their baby boy, because they valued what God said about life more than what their governing body said about the value of life.

Faith never bows down to fear...but it also proceeds in a manner that isn't foolish. As a pastor, I hear people all the time trying to cover foolishness by claiming faith:

- They'll go spend money and buy whatever they want while claiming "by faith" that "God will provide!"
  - God certainly will provide...through working hard and a wise budget.
- Or date someone with no love for Jesus, no respect for them as a person, and no drive in life but "have faith that they'll change once we're married."
  - God will change him...if he submits his life to Jesus, gets a job, quits playing video games for 5 hours every day, and starts acting like the spiritual leader God has called him to be.
- Faith isn't some trump card you get to play whenever you're acting foolishly. Spiritual faith works together with practical wisdom.
- We have M overseas in places where they're called to preach the gospel and live as salt + light and witnesses for Jesus...but they have to do it sometimes in covert ways so as not to get kicked out of the country, or even arrested or killed. They're showing great faith while simultaneously exercising great wisdom in living out their faith.

Now what else do we know about Moses's parents besides this?

Nothing. They don't get a book of the Bible dedicated to them or even their own chapter. We don't have VBS lessons on "Moses's parents faith." His parents' faith was really all happening in the background.

- But they chose to act in faith and not give in to fear, and God honored that. Their faith decision has reverberated through history and we're still being blessed by it today.

- We tend to think faith—the type that we’ve been looking at in Hebrews 11—happens in these huge “parting the Red Sea” moments.

But listen: **God often does some of his greatest work through the hidden faith of unknown saints**—parents, grandparents, and mentors who serve God faithfully, who pray regularly, who make disciples missionally day-in and day-out in the mundaneness of life.

- God does some of his greatest work through hidden faith...the type of faith that works behind the scenes, trusting God for the outcome.

I don’t know what your ‘hidden faith’ looks like—whether at your **workplace**, with your **roommate**, in your **neighborhood**, with your **finances**, in your **prayers and quiet spiritual disciplines**—but don’t ever underestimate what God can do in the lives of others through your hidden faith.

When I think of ‘hidden faith’ I can’t help but think specifically here of parents...those of you who so often you feel **unseen** and **unappreciated**. The sacrifices you are making might be hidden to others, but you need to know: God sees you...and he honors and blesses that kind of faith.

- **CHS** to parents who feel unseen: ***“You are as much serving God in looking after your own children, training them up in God’s fear, minding the house, and making your household a church for God as you would be if you had been called to lead an army to battle for the Lord of Hosts.”*** (Honestly, sometimes I think it’d be easier to lead an army than it is to parent.)

But see, **parents**, God has given us the **privilege and opportunity to raise up the next generation to love Jesus and be passionate about his**

**mission. And it’s your faith that’s gonna set the tone for your household.**

- That’s why we say around here that **your home is the first mission field**. We, TSC, exist to partner with you in reaching that mission field...but you are the primary disciplers of your family.
- You are the ones who are to **raise your kids up, teach them God’s ways, talk to them about Jesus, explain that salvation is found only in him**.
- Parents, it’s your job to create an atmosphere of faith at home and be an example to your kids and show them that Jesus is your household’s greatest treasure.
  - It’s your faith that sets the tone for your household.
  - The greatest legacy you can leave your kids and grandkids is **not a trust fund**; but trusting Jesus...a legacy of **character** and **faith** rooted in Christ!

Our oldest kid is only 9, but I’m already realizing how little control I really have over my kids. I’m already realizing that my greatest contribution to their eternity is through patterns and prayers.

1. **PATTERNS**: Quiet time. Finding moments to have gospel convos. Going to church each week. Asking them to join us in prayer and evangelism. Sharing the ups and downs of life with them...helping them see the hand of God in the valley and the mountains...sovereignty of God in the good and the bad.
  - a. Faith is **caught** as much as it is **taught**. What you desire your kids to **be**, they first have to **see** in you.
2. **PRAYER**: **Paul Miller** in his phenomenal book *A Praying Life* says, **“If you are not praying, then you are quietly confident that time, money, and talent are all you need in life. You’ll always be a little too tired, a little too busy. But if, like Jesus, you realize you can’t do life on your own, then no matter how**

busy, no matter how tired you are, you will find the time to pray.”

- a. **Mom/Dad:** The thing that’s going to shape your family more than anything are the **calluses on your knees** with an **open Bible in front of you**, walking with God daily and trusting him to sovereignly direct your kids’ hearts and lives.
  - i. If you don’t know where or how to start in praying for your kids, I can’t recommend this book highly enough: *Prayers for Your Children* by James Banks.

The choices Moses’s parents made were **value statements**; they were **declarations**. What would your kids say you value most based on the choices you make each day for your family? Moses’s parents said: *We believe choosing God’s way is always right even when it’s hard.*

Well Baby Moses starts to get a little bigger and his parents are faced with another choice—most of you know this story. His parents realize they can’t hide him any longer so, BY FAITH, they make a little **floating pack-n-play**, stick Moses in it and drop him into the Nile River (which, shows an incredible amount of faith but, if we’re being honest, also means they’re probably not winning any **Parent of the Year Awards**...*they dropped him in the river*. BTW, *this should be a lesson to some of you parents who have a hard time leaving your 6-month old in Summit Kids*. *Moses’ parents put him in the river at 3 months and he turned out OK...you’re kid w/b just fine in SK, I promise*).

- Moses’s big sister, Miriam, runs alongside the river bank and she sees *who else but the daughter of Pharaoh himself pick Moses up and take him home.*

- Well Miriam says to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Hey, I bet you could use some help with that new baby, huh? I know a great nanny!”
- So she runs and tells her mom, “Mom! Pharaoh’s daughter needs a nanny cuz *she picked up Baby Moses*—your son, my brother—from the river. You gotta apply for the job!”
- She goes down, applies for the job, and **during her interview** they’re like, “Oh wow, look, he really likes you! Incredible.” She gets hired. **And now she’s getting paid to raise her own baby.**

## THE FAITH OF MOSES

Because of his parents faith, Moses is given a lease on life. He’s raised in Pharaoh’s family, but he’s also being raised *by* his biological mom.

- He likely has his **biological mother** telling him, “*Don’t forget: you’re a Hebrew. You belong to God.*”
- While **Pharaoh’s daughter** is saying, “*I’m so happy you’re in our royal family...I wanna make you rich and powerful beyond your wildest dreams.*”

So as he grows up, it comes to a point where **Moses has a choice to make of his own**...look at v24: <sup>24</sup>By faith Moses, when he was grown up (scholars tell us he was 40 years old), refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,

When I read this I feel like it’s a biblical version of the famous “**This is Sparta**” scene from 300: A Persian envoy arrives in Sparta and offers the Spartan King Leonidas power over all of Greece if only he will bow to the will of the almighty Xerxes.

- **Gerard Butler** immediately turns this proposition down which stuns the leader of the Persian envoy: “**This is madness! Don’t**

*you realize everything you're giving up—the power, the money, the fame, the protection, the prosperity!--THIS IS MADNESS!"*

- To which Leonidas famously responds by shouting: **"THIS IS SPARTA!!!"** Then he kicks him down into this giant pit. It's awesome. Next Men's Conference that's what we're doing.

In much less dramatic fashion, that's basically what's happening here. In Egypt, Moses has all the **privilege** and **power** and **position** you could ever want—he's got the title, house, all new electric camel, bank account, solid 401k, vacation properties...

- **Yet he chooses to walk away from all of it.** And for what? It's not like he's trading one position for another—like he's going from **Egyptian royalty** to become the **President of Israel** (that wouldn't happen for another *40 years*, mind you).

Not only that, think about the relational cost here: **Pharaoh's daughter has raised him for forty years!** It's said that **she herself was childless**. He owed his life to this princess. So to just walk away from her not only feels **thankless**, it feels **cruel** and **callous**.

By refusing to be called her son he's giving up **riches** and a **relationship**.

- This is **Leonidas** walking away from Greco power.
- This is **Prince Harry** walking away from Buckingham Palace.
- It's **Harry Potter** throwing away the Elderwand.

Moses refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter would've had everyone screaming, **"This is madness!!!"** Instead it's his faith moment where he screams: **"THIS IS FAITH!"**...and it's BY THIS FAITH he walks away <sup>25</sup>**choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.**

Moses was willing to give up everything—to suffer the loss of everything—in order to gain Christ. See, Moses **chose to follow God in faith** because he knew that **you're only as durable as that which you love most**—you're only as durable as that which you have the most faith in.

- He knew that if his faith was in something finite—**money, physical health, a relationship, a political party, sexual attractiveness**—well, those things are always going to be under threat, which means you're always gonna be **anxious** or **worried** that something is gonna take those away.
- What Moses understood was that if the center of his life was a God who is **immortal, unshakeable, dependable, ever-present, good, faithful, loving, mighty, patient, righteous, trustworthy, and unchanging** then what is there to fear?

Just like his parents, Moses's choices reveal his values. There's a few faith lessons we learn from the early life of Moses:

### **1. Faith is always worth it...but it comes with a cost.**

When you choose to follow Jesus Christ, it's going to mean walking away from some things you're used to.

- It might mean walking away from your **sinful lifestyle**.
- It might mean walking away from some **bad habits**...or **bad relationships**.
- It might even mean walking away from some legitimately GOOD things—because those good things you've turned into "God" things which are actually idols keeping you from following Jesus, the BEST thing.
  - Faith might call you to **quit your cushy job and move overseas** to share the gospel with an UPG.

- Faith might call you to **give your entire bonus** to a church or a family in need.
- Faith might call you to **start that FCA group** at your school at the risk of being the “weird kid.”
- **VM’s and texts after I got saved from drinking buddies...** My faith came at a cost.
- Faith might cost you some **comfort** and **convenience**, it might cost you being **misunderstood**, it might cost you the **pain of alienation** or **separation from a relationship or friendship...BUT IT’S WORTH IT.**

Moses CHOOSES to identify with God's people, even though he knew it would mean **suffering** and **hardship**. He knew it would lead to that, but <sup>26</sup>**He considered the reproach** (disapproval; shame) **of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.**

- “Considered” is a **calculation** word, not stoicism...he thought about this. He **calculated** and **weighed** his choices.
- It’s the same word the Apostle Paul uses in **Phil 3:8** when he says, **“I consider/count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.”**
- Moses and Paul both knew, add Christ to any side of the equation and he tips the scale. Jesus is the ultimate trump card.

I wanna make sure you understand this, so **Pop Quiz. We’re gonna do a few math calculations:**

- **Basic Math:**

- 3 \_\_ 2

- Steak \_\_ Salad

- Dwayne Johnson \_\_ Nicolas Cage

- **Life Math:**

- Mistreatment \_\_ Pleasure

- Reproach \_\_ Treasure

- **Faith Math**

- Mistreatment *with God’s people* \_\_ Pleasure *of sin*

- Reproach *of Christ* \_\_ Treasure *of Egypt*

There’s a cost to following Jesus; but it’s always worth it! As this world drifts further and further away from Christian ideals, there might even be **social**, **political**, and potentially **legal** costs to pay for following Jesus. We’ve seen this throughout history:

- Whether it was **believers collecting babies** left out to die of exposure in the first and second centuries of the church...or **courageous bishops advocating** for the end of the gladiatorial games...or **Martin Luther protesting** the sale of indulgences...or a **group of black teenagers refusing** to leave the Woolworth’s lunch counter in the 60’s.
- **But when the laws of our world contradict the laws of God, we always honor the latter instead of the former.**

Faith is always worth it, but it comes with a cost. The choices you make—to obey or disobey God—are statements about the value you place on following him.

## 2. Faith sees that sin is fun...but fleeting.

<sup>25</sup>**choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.**

Sin is fun . . . real fast. If ever there was a visual representation of the fleeting pleasures of sin, it’s this: **Bubble wand.**

People will often say, “Man, I hate sin.” And I know what you mean, but we also keep doing it. You know why? Cuz it’s fun. *But then it’s not.* Then it’s fun again. *Then it’s not.*

- So then **you try something else.** Fun for a while...*then it’s not.*

**1 John 2** makes this point in even greater detail: <sup>16</sup>For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one’s possessions—is not from the Father, but is from the world.

<sup>17</sup>And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.

- The Greek word for “lust” has the connotation of a desire that has taken on too much weight in your life; don’t just think sexual sin. **Lusts are cravings that control you.**
  - the lust of the flesh is about passions; temptation to feel; pleasure
  - lust of the eyes is about possessions; temptation to have; materialism
  - pride in one’s possessions is about position, popularity, and power; temptation to be; status
    - These things are NOT from the Father...they’re all passing away...they’re fleeting pleasures!

When was the last time you sinned and thought, “Man, I just feel better. I feel so content, so happy, so full, so at peace.”

- Have you ever heard the statement: *Regularly viewing pornography improved my overall well being 25%.*
- What are you so happy about? *PORN. It’s just made me so considerate and caring. I’m so much more social. I treat people so much better now.*

Again, when you hear “pleasures of sin” don’t just think **sexual or thrill-seeking sin.** The fleeting pleasure of sin can just as easily be found in **pride, gossip, greed, self-righteousness.**

- What I’m telling you is this: Don’t settle for the fleeting pleasures of Egypt and **miss out on the eternal rewards of heaven.** Don’t fall so in love with the world that you miss out on God’s plan for your life.
- Don’t die with **money**, and your **name on a plaque** at a university, in a **big house**, with a **nice car**, but a wasted life.
- To be clear: nothing wrong with the **house**, or the **car**, or the **job**, or the **watch**, or the **money**, or the **title**...**unless you had to give up God to get it.**
  - **Jim Elliot:** He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.
    - *A pile of gold or a bale of hay, can’t take it with you on judgment day.*

The question is: **What desire has taken on too much weight in your life? What cravings control you?** If you don’t know what your temptations are, you’re already in danger. You need to **find out what they are today before you have to encounter them tomorrow.**

1. If you were Satan, how would you tempt you?
  - a. If you’re unsure, lean into your community. Ask your friends, your spouse, whoever is close to you and a believer. Most of the time *other ppl* see our blindspots much sooner than we do (hence the term: BLINDspot).
2. If you were to commit some heinous sin 5 years from now, what would you look back on today and say, “I see the beginning stages of that?”
  - a. **Cheating on spouse...social media**
  - b. **Adultery at 40 begins with wandering eyes at 20**



- c. *If you and your spouse switched phones today would you be together tomorrow?*

Faith is the process of learning to get from your Heavenly Father what you used to get from Pharaoh. The way to combat the cravings that can control you is to see the **infinite value of possessing Jesus Christ**. When you see what a treasure Christ is, everything else fades away. Don't settle for the **fleeting pleasures of Egypt** when you are offered **eternal pleasure in Christ Jesus**—PSALM 16:11, "fullness of joy and pleasure forevermore"

## CONCLUSION (VAMP)

By faith Moses gave up what the world thought was valuable in order to attain something even greater. <sup>26</sup>He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

### 3. Faith looks beyond this life to an eternal reward.

Moses didn't choose **who he was born to** or the **cultural climate he was born into**; he didn't choose **what he went through early on**. But he chose his response and he focused on his reward.

This wasn't some earthly reward...in fact, his earthly "reward" after giving up the treasures of Egypt was the wilderness for 40 years with a bunch of complaining people. **Hebrews 11:16** tells us the reward he was looking to was "a better country, that is, a heavenly one."

- Moses knew giving up something good now for something better later isn't a **sacrifice**; it's an **investment**.

2010: Living with J+K to pay off debt before moving to NC...This was our room

- Went from living in our own apartment as newlyweds to living in a 3x5 box with someone else...but it was worth it cuz we knew it was gonna give us financial freedom before we left for grad school.
- **We were willing to give up something good now for something better later.**

Moses let go of all the **riches of Egypt** in order to gain the **reward of heaven**. *What will your choices this week reveal about the value God holds in your life?*

Just like Moses, **I wonder if it's time for some of you to make the choice to "grow up" spiritually today**. You might be 40, 84, or 14 but I wonder if some of you **need to choose** that you won't be defined anymore by the **allures of Egypt**, by the **environment** you were raised in, or by the **events** that brought you to this point...but rather it's time for you to choose faith in Jesus. Today, don't be of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

- **Faith is always worth it...but it comes with a cost.**
- **Faith sees that sin is fun...but fleeting.**
- **Faith looks beyond this life to an eternal reward.**

## PRAY

"I consider everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."