Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Things Faith Accepts and Rejects, Part 1
Scripture: Hebrews 11:23-25
Code: 1632

We're gonna study the Word now. If you have your Bible, turn to the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Hebrews, chapter 11, the continuing study of the subject of faith. And my, how our hearts have been blessed and thrilled as we've studied the subject of faith in this chapter. We have already seen the life of faith, the walk of faith, the work of faith, the pattern of faith, the victory of faith and tonight we come to the life of Moses beginning in verse 23 and the choice of faith, or the decisions of faith, either one. We're gonna talk about what faith accepts and what it rejects.

True faith is very selective, very selective. It chooses very carefully. Now, as we've seen, before we get into this, in this particular chapter, the Holy Spirit, as in all of the book of the Hebrews, is writing to Jewish individuals. And he wants his Jewish readers to understand the absolute priority of faith because, you see, in Judaism at this particular time, works had become the dominant factor. And the point that he is making in the 11th chapter is that the new covenant, which is the first 10 chapters, is only received by faith, not works. God is not approached by works. He is not approached by religiosity or ceremony or some kind of ritual. He is only approached by simple faith, believing in Him, trusting in Him apart from any works of your own. And that's been his point and he makes it in great detail and at great length in the 11th chapter, repeating over and over again, "by faith," "by faith," "by faith," "by faith." And he does this so frequently because it is such a foreign commodity to his readers. They are so used to works as a way to God, that they need carefully to be dealt out, step by step, an understanding of faith. The legalistic, ritualistic concepts that were in their minds needed to be supplanted by the concepts of faith. And in order that they might not think faith is a new thing, a new heresy, as it were, he uses all Old Testament people to illustrate faith...that it's nothing new, God has always operated on the basis of faith. He has always operated on the basis of simply believing in Him apart from any kind of system of religion. And now, Moses is the next man in giving us the full picture of faith. We learned how to live by faith from Abel. We learned how to walk by faith from Enoch. We learned how to work by faith from Noah. We learned the pattern of faith from Abraham. We learned the victory of faith in the face of death from Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. And now we come to the decisions of faith, the choices of faith, and we learn that from Moses and also from his parents in a brief mention in verse 23. Now, Moses was a man of faith. Moses believed God. Moses came before, really, the system that he received on Mt. Sinai, the system of commandments. And before all of the laws and rituals that were Israel's, Moses before all of that, believed God and that was the key to his life. And Moses sets for us, I think, a great standard for the decisions that true faith must make.

Now, life is made up of decisions. We know that and that's a simple truth but _____. You get up in the morning; your first decision is to get out of bed. Your next decision is what you wear. Your next decision is what you eat. You go about life always in a process of making decisions. Life is only a question of decisions. In terms of the Scripture, temporal things and eternal things are based upon your decision. I always think of I Kings, chapter 20 where the king gave a man a particular assignment, said watch this man. It was the middle of a battle and he said, if he gets away, you'll pay with your life. And he came back and the man had gotten away. And he said to the servant, What happened? How did he get away? And the servant replied, While I was busy here and there, he was gone. That's a rather ridiculous answer. But his decision was to fool around and he paid the consequences. There are decisions that face us, very severe and very important decisions. Moses, a man of faith, learned to make the right ones.

Now, Christian maturity, people...and here's one angle on a definition of it...Christian maturity is making right decisions. That's what it is. You can always tell a mature Christian by the decisions that he makes. And you can always tell an immature Christian by the decision that he makes. He makes wrong ones. Put it another way. Holiness is making right decisions. Carnality is making wrong ones. All of life is decisions and all of the Christian life is decisions. And really, your Christian life rises or falls in terms of maturity and holiness on the basis of the decisions that you make. When Satan tempts, you either decide to say no or yes. When opportunity calls and you have a time when you can communicate to somebody the truth of Jesus Christ; you either take it or you don't. Everything is a decision. The time comes for you, you have a few spare moments you might spend reading the Bible, you make a decision. You either read the Bible or you don't. You get up on Sunday morning, you have an opportunity to come to a seminar or class, study the Bible, you make a decision. Either you get up or you don't. And invariably, sooner or later, it's gonna touch your whole Christian life, the decisions that you make. In business you have a decision. You have an opportunity to make a lot of money or to do what's right. And sometimes you have those kind of decisions. Believe me; we all do. Even in the ministry we do. Not usually related to making a lot of money but situations that could be beneficial to us or we do what's right. And we either grab that opportunity for the glory of God or we lose it.

J.J. Engles wrote this of opportunity. "Master of human destinies am I. Fame, love and fortune on my footstep wait. Cities and fields I walk. I penetrate deserts and seas remote. And passing by hovel and mart and palace, soon or late, I knock unbidden once on every gate. If sleeping, wake. If fasting, rise before I turn away. It is the hour of fate. And they who follow me, reach every state mortals desire and conquer every foe, save death. But those who doubt or hesitate condemn to failure. Penury and woe seek me in vain and needlessly implore. I answer not. I return no more." Shakespeare said this. "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and miseries." Napoleon used to say that in battle there is a crisis in every fight. There is a period of 10 to 15 minutes on which the

issue of the battle depends. To gain this is victory; to lose it is defeat. You see, everything in life becomes an opportunity to gain for the glory of God or to lose. They only come once. The Greeks had a statue called Opportunity. On the front it had long flowing hair; on the back it was bald. You could grab it coming at you; you couldn't get it going by (laughter). That was Opportunity. Since the beginning of time God has given men choices that affect his life. The first man that had a choice was Adam and he took the wrong one and everybody went with him. Every turn of life turns on the decision that you and I make. Either I grasp every opportunity for the glory of God or I miss some. I choose the way of the flesh, the world and Satan. And the way men have continued to decide, determines their destiny, both temporal and eternal.

Deuteronomy 30, verse 19 says this. "I call Heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore" says God, "choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." You have a choice. Joshua 24:15, you remember these great words? "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my house"...what?..."we will serve the Lord." I Kings 18:21, Elijah on Mt. Carmel said, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him...if Baal, follow him. And the people answered him not a word." All men make a choice. All Christians live in the process of making choices. Abel chose God's way, "a more excellent sacrifice." His brother didn't and his brother was cursed. Abel was blessed. Enoch chose God's way, to walk with God. The rest of the world didn't. Noah chose God's way, to obey God and do what God said. The rest of the world didn't. They drowned. Abraham chose God's way, to live a life of faith. The people in whose land he dwelt didn't and they were destroyed. Isaac, Jacob and Joseph chose God's way, to believe God for what they couldn't see and in it they conquered death. The heathen refused to believe God and death conquered them.

There have been others in the Bible who have made the right choices. In I Kings 19:18 it says "Yea [Yet] I have left me 7,000 in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed him." God says, I've got 7,000 who made the right choice. An illustration of this comes to my mind in the book of Nehemiah, which is a great book. I think it's in the 10th chapter at verse 28. "And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims and all they who had"...those are various leaders..."and all they who had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God..." You see? They had separated themselves from the people of the land unto the law of God. "...their wives, their sons, their daughters, every one having knowledge and having understanding. They did cleave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse and into an oath..." Now here's a good thing. In other words, they swore something. "...to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses, the servant of God, to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes." Now, this is post-revival Israel. They got a great revival under Nehemiah and now they are, sort of, you know, saying we promise, we swear upon ourselves a curse if we don't do it, that we will follow God. They made a right choice. Josiah, the king, in II Kings 22:2, it says of him, this. "And he did

that which was right in the sight of the Lord..." And not only that, but listen to this great statement. "...and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left." He made his choice and he walked in it.

And now we come to Moses and Moses shows us the choices that faith makes. And these are great truths for us to see. And, you know, whenever faith makes a right choice, Satan is immediately thwarted. Now, right choices are made on the basis of faith because sometimes the things that Satan throws in front of us are very alluring to the flesh, right. And we really don't see any immediate spiritual substitute that's gonna be nearly so interesting. I mean, when Satan comes along and says, look, if you do this in your business, you'll probably make $50,000; now, it might be a little shady but go ahead and do it. And we think to ourselves, well, no; that would be wrong. I better do what the Lord wants. What are the dividends? Well, uh, gee, a little joy, maybe (laughter). Let's see, joy as against $100,000, $50,000, well...see. You know, in other words, maybe sometimes as we think about it, the spiritual commodity that becomes ours isn't nearly so enticing as the other thing. And so we have to say, by faith, God, I'm going to believe. Although at this point, I really think I could use the other way; I'm gonna believe You and do what's right. That's how faith operates. And when you've done that you put up the shield of faith. Remember that in Ephesians 6:16? You know what the shield of faith is?...just believing God. Every time you believe God, Satan's arrows are stopped. Satan comes along and says do this, do this, do this. You say, I don't want to do that. God said to do this. Here's another thought. We've been through this when we went through Ephesians. But you know that every time you sin, who have you believed? Who did you believe when you sinned?...Satan. So if you don't want to sin, who do you start believing?...God. Therefore, what is the shield against sin?...faith. That's what's called the shield of faith. All you gotta do is believe God. It's amazing how stupid we are. We believe Satan and we know he's the father of lies. He doesn't do anything but lie. Moses lived by faith. The shield was up in the life of Moses. He was a man of faith. Now, this is a fantastic point to the Jewish reader because, you see, Moses was always associated, not with faith but with what?...with law, works. Moses, the great Mosaic Law. We always think of Moses in accord with rules and ritual and ceremony and legalism and not so. He was man of faith. Now, the record of the life of Moses, of course, covers the Old Testament from Exodus, chapter 2 to Deuteronomy, chapter 34, so about four of the books of the Pentateuch are about this man, Moses. He was a tremendous man. He was the greatest of the Old Testament figures and his greatness was not based on legalism; it was based on his faith in God. He really believed God. He believed God in the midst of unbelievable circumstances.

Now, as we look at him, we're going to see the decisions that faith makes. And I think he gives us a great standard. We'll look at some of it tonight and then we'll look at the rest of it next Lord's day evening. First of all, Roman numeral I, if you want to keep an outline: Things faith rejects. What did he reject? And this we'll find in verses 24 through 27. Now, he was a man of faith. Faith accepts certain things and says no to certain other things. What things does true faith reject? Number one, the world's prestige...the world's prestige. I love this. Verse 24: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years"...we know how old he was at this point, 40 years old..."refused to be called the son of

Pharaoh's daughter..." That's interesting. You see, Moses, for 40 years had written to the...risen, I should say, to the heights of Egyptian society. He had been one of the Hebrew babies that was supposed to have been killed by Pharaoh. Remember that Pharaoh sent out an edict to have all of the newborn babies in Israel killed, thrown into the river. But the parents of Moses, Amram and Jochebed...and we'll talk about them in a few minutes...were careful to hide him. They hid him three months in the house and then, finally, when they couldn't hide him any longer, apparently he got to running around and yelling a lot and they had to put him in the river. So they built a little boat for him, put him in the river, he floated down. And Pharaoh's daughter was down there taking a bath at the river, saw this little basket come floating by, opened it up and there was little Moses in it. What a fantastic circumstance. And she took Moses as her own son. And so Moses had grown up in the society of Egypt, the wealthiest, most advanced civilization in that part of the world. And to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter meant, technically, that you were the prince, and in a technical sense had the right someday to even rule in the land. Boy, you didn't get any higher. The greatest ruler in the world was the Pharaoh and Moses was in line.

Now, go to Exodus, chapter 2 and let's look at the story and just pick up a few points of interest. Exodus, chapter 2, verse 5: "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river and her maidens walked along by the river's side. And when she saw the ark among the flags"...(reeds)..."she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child and behold, the babe wept"...par for the course..."And she had compassion on him and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.'" Here she discovers little Moses. Verse 7: "Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go"...isn't it interesting that the little baby's sister has run along the river to make sure that little Moses was gonna be okay?...Miriam...verse 7, "Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for thee?'" She knew just the one. "And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go.' And the maid went and called the child's mother."...got Jochebed..."And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, 'Take this child away and nurse it for me and I will give thee thy wages.' And the woman took the child and nursed him." That's quite a recovery process that God brought about, wasn't it? Just fantastic. Now, it says there, and this is the point that I want to pull out of here..."take this child away and nurse it for me"...Jochebed took the child and weaned the child. There's a possibility that this was a three-year period according to some. Some scholars feel that it was as many as 12 years that she kept Moses in her own home. And during that time, he would receive the full training of the Jewish home. He would be instilled and ingrained with the Messianic hope. I kind of lean toward more than three years, somewhere maybe between three and 12...long enough so that they could have taught him Messianic truth...long enough so that he would have had the great promise of Abraham that had been reiterated to Isaac, Jacob and Joseph reiterated to him so that he knew what God had planned for his people because it's apparent later on that he did know it. So however long he stayed, however many years Jochebed was able to raise her own son, it was long enough to instill him with the great truths that were Israel's promises from God that they not only would leave Egypt, but that God had promised them a great Deliverer someday and that he knew well the great Abrahamic Covenant of a great

nation, a great seed and through them the world would be blessed and the land would belong to them and all of this undoubtedly was drilled into little Moses. But after the training period was over, he rejoined the royal court. And when he rejoined the royal court, he was in the position as the prince of Egypt. He was in the position to receive everything that Egypt had to offer. You couldn't get any higher than that unless you were the Pharaoh himself. The name given to him was Mosheh. It means "because I drew him out of water." Now, between verses 10 and 11 is a gap. It says in verse 10 "the child grew and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. And she called his name Moses and she said, 'Because I drew him out of the water.' And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown..." Now, between verse 10 and 11 is a gap of many years, at least 30 years, as Moses is growing. These are years of his maturing. And if you check with Acts, chapter 7, verse 22 in the sermon of Stephen, you'll find that Stephen says, during those years, Moses was exposed to all of the wisdom of the Egyptians. So he had a fantastic education during those years, being educated at the highest level of education in the house of Pharaoh and learning the things that only the Pharaoh's house could teach and communicate, with all that was available, he was exposed to the wisdom of the Egyptians.

I've often wondered, too, what kind of boyhood he had, what it was like to be in Pharaoh's house. Recently, some archeological discoveries have uncovered some of the things that they believe to be the toys of Egyptian children in those days. Through archeology and some other related studies, some things have come to light that are interesting. I'll just give you a few of the things that I discovered in my reading. Children were generally, in that day, very carefree and they played much like children today. Apparently they used sticks, stones and made objects out of clay, mud and bits of broken pottery...much craft that they have found. Among the more wealthy children, some toys were probably used. Tops, miniature weapons and several elaborate mechanical toys have been discovered, toys that operated by the pulling of strings. Swimming, horseback riding, hunting, playing with pets would all be experiences of a young boy in Egypt. It's another interesting note that we have found some indication of the hairstyles. The girls let their hair hang loose or braided it into pigtails. The boys' heads were shaved except for one long lock on the side, which was braided down over the ear. Certainly a lovely style (laughter). They found an 11-year-old mummy with that on his head, best they could tell. So Moses grew up, a childhood in Egypt, but even all this training in Egypt and being absorbed in the society of Egypt never really blunted his knowledge of the hope of Israel and the promise of God and the promise of the Promised Land. The formal education of Egypt, which included the reading and the writing of hieroglyphic and hieratic scripts, their copying of texts, the language of Canaan...undoubtedly, he learned several languages. All of this was refining his God-given ability to be a leader and to write the Pentateuch, which he wrote...the first five books of the Bible. All of this education went together to make him God's man. Forty years in Egypt God trained him and made him something, then 40 years in the desert He broke him back to nothing, and for 40 years he used him. So when Moses reached the age of 40 he faced a very crucial decision. Now, he had to choose whether to become a full-fledged Egyptian without any reservation or to join his own people, Israel. Now, he had a key to making the decision and that was his faith in God. All through

those 40 years, he'd never wavered, apparently, in his faith in God. For 40 years, he enjoyed the privileges, the prestige, the status, the honors of a prince in Egypt, with all the royal rigmarole that went with it, but the time came to face the biggest decision of his life. And it's very apparent that God came to him. God spoke to him somehow. God indicated to him that he wanted him to go back to his people, Israel, and lead them out to the Promised Land. He had to make a choice whether to throw aside everything that he had in the palace and go live with slaves or to forget the call of God and grab what he had. In Acts, chapter 7, again, going back to Stephen's sermon, which deals so interestingly with the character of Moses, just pulling out a couple of things. It says in verse 23 of Acts 7, "And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him and avenged him that was oppressed and smote the Egyptian." He killed him. "For he supposed his brethren would have understood"...watch..."how that God, by his hand would deliver them, but they understood not." You see, he knew that God had already called him to be the deliverer. And he thought, if I go in there and show that to them, and I'll smite this Egyptian, I'll kill him, that'll prove to them whose side I'm on. They'll know that I'm to be their deliverer, but they didn't buy it. They didn't buy it. But he knew what God wanted out of him. Now our text here tells us, in Hebrews 11, what he did with the honor of the palace. And in simple words, he chucked the whole thing. I love it. What it says is this. "by faith Moses, when he was come to years"...what's the next word?..."refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Moses did not seek the world's prestige. He sought that which was the will of God. He knew God had a better kingdom. He knew God had a better reward. Prestige and honor and fame is a powerful thing. Most people live all their lives dreaming about attaining it. You know that? Sure we do. We put ourselves in the position of famous people. Most people live trying to get up higher on the social ladder. Moses gave it all up. And you say, well, I've given it up, too. I've never had it, but I'm giving it up (laughter). Moses had it and gave it up. You know, though, the world has its evaluation system. How do you get honor in this world? Well, usually one of four ways. Number one, you're in the right family. If you're born in the right family, you're honored. If your name happens to be Prince Charlie (laughter), you know, or Lynda Bird or Tricia Nixon or anybody. If you just happen to be in the right family, you are automatically thrust into the public eye with a measure of greatness and you may not have any at all. You may have. You may not. Another thing that the world uses to measure prestige and honor is money. If you have a lot of the greenies, you see, you'll get the honor of the world. I don't think it's always honest honor, but you get it. Another thing is education. If you have enough degrees after your name, certain people think that that's what it's all about. And then, of course, if it isn't right family, money and education, it's position, if you happen to be in a particular position, if you happen to be famous because of what you do. Maybe it's athletics, maybe it's entertainment, maybe it's finances, maybe it's business. I don't know, whatever it may be. But you see, all of that has no relation to God's greatness. He honors people on a totally different basis. He's not interested in what family you came from, how much money you have, how much education you've got or what position you have in the world. That is not remotely the concern of God in terms of greatness. And I can prove that to you because I want to introduce you to a man who was greater than Moses. I want to

introduce you to a man who's greater than David, Abraham, Elijah or anybody else who ever lived in the Old Testament. This man was greater than all of them. You say, you're talking about Jesus, aren't you? Nope. I'm not at all. I'm talking about a man you wouldn't believe. Listen to this. Terrific! Verse 15 of Luke 1: "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord..." You say, who is it? Back up, verse 13: "But the angel said unto him, 'Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, thou shalt call his name"...what?..."John"...the greatest man that ever lived up until this time, John the Baptist. You say, what made him great? Right family? No. He was just born to a simple priest, Zacharias and Elisabeth. You say, well, being a priest was a pretty good thing, wasn't it? There were so many orders of priests that you only got to serve in the temple a couple of times a year. A priest was a very humble thing. You say, well, he probably had a lot of money. He didn't have too much money. He lived in the desert. Couldn't afford too many real fancy clothes. He wore a camel's skin, sort of a modified Tarzan suit (laughter). You say, well, he must have had a tremendous education. He didn't have any education at all. You say, well, what a lofty position. Not very much of a position...he was out there and he even had a strange diet. The Bible says he ate locusts and wild honey. And I don't care how you try to convince me, grasshoppers with honey on them still doesn't make it (laughter). Simple family, no money, no education, a desert wanderer with the most bizarre kind of clothes and diet, yet he shall be great, not in the sight of the world, but what?...the sight of the Lord. Now let me give you a verse that used to shock me until I began to settle upon what God sets as His standard for greatness. Matthew 11:11...don't ever forget this verse. It's great. Listen to this. "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women"...that certainly takes in most of us (laughter)..."Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Well, that's a powerful statement. You say, what made him so great? Well, there's a couple of things that stand out in Luke 1 that made him great. Number one, he was obedient. Number two, he was filled with Spirit. Number three, he turned many of the hearts of the people of Israel to God. You see, God measures greatness totally different than the world. Totally different. John said, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." All that the world has is "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life" and all these things are gonna perish. "But he that doeth the will of God abideth"...what?..."forever." Jesus said, "If any man will come after me let him"...first thing..."deny"...what?..."himself, take up his cross, follow me." The disciples said, "We have forsaken all to follow thee." What'd they forsake?...fishnets. (Laughter) Big deal. Moses abandoned the palace. First article in the covenant which Moses received from God was "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." He must have the preeminence. Moses is a classic, absolutely classic example of self-denial. My friends, as long as you can break with God in order to preserve any worldly interest of yours, then you don't really operate on faith. The strength of faith is proven by self-denial.

Baron von Weltz renounced his title, his estates, his revenues, and he went as a missionary to British Guyana. And today his body fills a lonely grave in British Guyana. This is what he said. As he renounced his title, he spoke these words: "What is it to me to bear the title well-born when I am born again to Christ? What is it to me to have the title Lord, when I desire to be the servant of Christ?

What is it to be called Your Grace when I have need of God's grace? All these vanities I will away with and all else I will lay at the feet of my dear Lord Jesus," end quote. Thus, did Moses. He really didn't care about all the things that the world had to offer. In fact, he didn't even care about any of the things the world had to offer.

You know, I'm not famous and I've never been close to being famous. But we all have had, at some point in our life, a little taste of it. And I can remember when I finished college, that I had 13 school records in various athletics. And on the last day I was there, I went and I looked at the record board, you know, and I just kind of enjoyed looking at it (laughter). And, you know, it was important then. I mean, I had worked hard. And I remember I came back the next year and I only had eight. Somebody broke five of them. I came back two years later, and somebody lost the record board (laughter). Boy, what a lesson! (Laughter) I was talking to Neal Steinhauer who comes to our church who held the world's record in shot put and he was saying that he had a long telephone conversation the other night with Jim Ryun. You know Jim Ryun, the great miler? Jim said that through all of the trials and troubles that he has had, which came to a climax in Munich, he has discovered that the most preeminent and important thing in his life is the person of Jesus Christ. And he's completely given himself to serve Jesus Christ with his whole heart. And he's found out that all of the accolades and the applause of the world don't measure just the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Of course, this over joys his wife who's been a Christian all along. I always think of Brian Sternberg. You remember Brian Sternberg who was the world's greatest pole vaulter? He was working out on a trampoline one day and he landed on his neck and he's been paralyzed ever since, just almost a vegetable in a wheelchair. Through that he came to know Jesus Christ. And all of the accolades and all of the honors and the status that the world came to give him can't even begin to touch what he knows in Jesus Christ. Boy, the world doesn't have much to offer when you compare it with what the Lord offers and Moses knew it. So Moses did not choose the world's prestige. He chose, rather, to lower himself to join the slaves of Israel and be their leader.

Second thing, Moses said no to the world's pleasure...to the world's pleasure. Verse 25, great verse; listen to this. You know it already probably. "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy"...what?..."the pleasures of sin for a season." He'd just rather suffer with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Now, let me tell you something, folks. Sin is fun. It is terrific. We enjoy it. It has very, very enjoyable characteristics for a season. Hamartias apolausis...sin is fun...the enjoyment of sin, the pleasure of sin. Now, Moses was called to give his life for his people. He knew it. Now, he had a choice. I either do what God tells me to do or I disobey. Now, it'll be fun to disobey from a human standpoint. I get to live in palace, have all the goodies that I have, all the women I want, all the money I want, all the this, this, this, this, all the power I want, all the authority I want. That's a lot of fun to have all that stuff, but God said go down to those people who are in slavery and assign yourself to them. That's the choice I have. To stay is sin; to go is obedience. He chose to do what?...to go. And so he considered not the enjoyment of sin.

To have sought to retain his place in the Egyptian court would have been sin. Now, let me say this, it's not sin to be in the Egyptian court unless God tells you to be somewhere else. You with me? It's not sin to have certain things. It's not sin to have money. It's not sin to possess certain things and to have certain honors and certain things in the world in terms of status. It's not sin unless you choose it over what God calls you to do. Then it's sin. Of course, sin can be fun for a season, but only a season. I like what Job 20, verse 5 says. "The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the enjoyment of the hypocrite is for a moment." See, very brief. In fact, there's a couple of other passages that maybe we ought to look at in connection with that. Job...I'll read them to you...Job 21:7, this is kind of a complaint. "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?" Do you ever ask that question of God? How come all the crummy people do so much better than I do? (Laughter) "Their seed is established in their sight with them and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them." How come the wicked do so well? "Their bull gendereth..." In other words, their cows have other cows. "...faileth not. Their cow calves and casteth not her calf." They don't have problems raising cattle. "They send forth their little ones like a flock and their children dance." They've got happy, healthy kids. "They take the timbrel and harp and rejoice at the sound of the flute. They spend their days in wealth..." And then, bang, like somebody dropped a bomb, "...and in a moment, they go down to Hell." Zap! Boy, what a picture! Here's all the happy, and having calves and little children dancing and it's going along and in a moment they go to Hell. That's what he says. Yeah, sin is real good for a little while. And in a moment it's over. Psalms 73, verse 12: "Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world. They increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocence." He says I'm purified but I'm poor. "For all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning. If I say I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against a generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me until I went into the sanctuary of God"...watch this..."then understood I their end." Did you hear it? He says I cleaned my life up and it didn't go well for me. I got chastened, kicked around, plagued and buffeted. I looked at the rich and they had it all and I didn't understand until I went into the sanctuary of the Lord and I considered their...what?...end. Sin is fun for a season, and only for a season. Isaiah said this, chapter 21, verse 4, "...the night of my pleasure hath...turned into fear..." Let me give you another verse, a potent verse. James 5:5: "You have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton"...put your hands on everything you could get..."you have nourished your hearts"...now watch this bomb..."as in a day of slaughter." You ever seen them fatten up a pig for slaughter, fatten up cattle for slaughter? He says, ah, you nourished yourselves. You did what you want. You got fat and sassy as in a day of slaughter. People, judgment comes and it comes sudden and it comes swift. Moses said sin is fun, but it's so brief, it's so brief. And the highest, most lasting joy is to do what God says. You know, I think David probably had a lot of fun with Bathsheba. I think that _____ when he saw old Bathsheba over there taking that sunbath, oooh, he liked that, see. (Laughter) _____ said, mm-mm, that's Bathsheba; I'd like to get to know her. And I think he just had a lot of fun with Bathsheba. But later on in his life, he cried out in the night of his guilt, "My sin, my sin is ever before me." And then he watched his children break his heart. He

watched the little baby, the product of that relationship with Bathsheba, die. He watched his son, Absalom, rebel against him and be hanged. He watched horrible things occur in his life. Sin was fun. I bet if David had to do it over again knowing what he knows; he wouldn't do it. You see, what the Lord does is give us pleasure forevermore. That's the kind I want. Isn't that the kind you want? Forevermore. You see, so Moses, he made a conscious choice to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. And that's an act of faith. He actually believed God. And he believed that if he did what God wanted him to do he'd come out better in the end.

Beloved, God has called us all to holiness. He's called us to come apart from sin. And it's not always easy 'cause the world is throwing all kinds of garbage in our path and it's so easy to reach down and pick it up. But Moses believed God and he said, God you want me to do what's right and you'll honor me for it and I'll do it. Now watch this, real faith. I mean, people, if you really believe God, what're gonna do? You gonna do what God says?..of course. Who's interest does God got on His heart?...yours...yours. The devil doesn't care about you. He only wants to devour you. If you really believe God, two things you'll do: You'll reject the world's prestige for the honor that only God can give and you'll reject the world's pleasure for the everlasting pleasure that only He can give. I think I'll stop there and next time we'll take it from there. Let's pray.

Our Father, we are grateful that, clearly, the Word of God gives us the choices that faith makes. If we really did believe You, we'd do what was right every time 'cause we know You love us. I always think about it in terms of my own children. I say to them, You know, I only tell you this because I love you. I tell them not to go out in the street because I don't want them to get hurt; it's not because I want to deprive them. And Lord, I know you work with us the same way. You tell us, Don't do that. I'm not trying to restrict you; I want you to have real joy. Oh, God, save us from wanting to climb the ladder of the world. Help us to want, more than anything else in all existence to have You honor us by saying, Well done, good and faithful servant. And Father, save us from being preoccupied with the pleasures of the world that bring joy for a season and tragedy forever. Help us to realize that we cannot sin without having it affect us and the people around us. Help us to pursue holiness with a passion. Help us to do what Moses did...refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and choose affliction with the people of God if we have to suffer, rather than the pleasures of sin for a season. God, may our faith be the kind of faith that makes right decisions.

While your heads are bowed tonight, just a little prayer of dedication with your heads bowed and your eyes closed. There are some of you here tonight, I know, that have never really met Jesus Christ. You've never invited Him into your life. Maybe you've been in church and you've been in some kind of religious structure, but you're all wrapped up in the world's affairs and pleasures of sin and you just really can't stay out. But you'd like to begin tonight by placing your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You'd like to begin the life of faith. If that's the case, right where you sit, all you have to do is say, God, I want to know Jesus Christ tonight. I want Him to come into my life. I want to believe. If your

heart is crying out to grasp God, it's as simple as your own faith. He's there. Believe it. Christ is alive. Believe it. In your heart, all you have to say is, God, I want to believe. I want to trust You. I don't want to become the devil's victim. And you can invite Jesus Christ into your life right now, right where you're sitting, and your life will be transformed from this moment, forever. Boy, what a promise that is. Others of you are Christians. Maybe tonight God just spoke _____. He's spoken to my heart about a lot of things this week as I've studied. One of the things is, you know, it's an easy temptation for us, so easy, to want the accolades of the world. If you've been searching for that above everything else, above..._____anything wrong with wanting to accomplish things in the world, to do your best, to be thought of as a diligent worker, as the best at your trade or your profession, nothing wrong with that at all, as long as in it all Jesus Christ gets the glory and the preeminence and as long as that's never set above that which He desires for you to do. If the consuming desire of your life is to please Him and these things come as a byproduct, then you've done it right. If you pursue these things, you've done it wrong. And maybe there's some of you who've been trapped in the pleasures of sin. And in your heart you know tonight that you want to be released and you want to know the pleasures that are forevermore, the joy unspeakable and full of glory that's ours when we do what is right.

Our Father, we thank You that the Word is clear and it's incisive and it cuts us, opens us up. Thank you for Moses. Dear God, what a man he was. _____learn from him. Father, for whatever we need of our life tonight, we know You have the supply. We pray that we'll come believing You for it. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2014 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).