

# Moses: An Example of Preferring the Lord Jesus

"... Teach me your ways so I may know you ..." Exodus 33:13

## Introduction

- A. In our desire to honor the Lord Jesus we must learn to respond to Him.
- B. One of the clearest examples in the Bible, of how to respond to our Savior, in faith, love and hope, is found in the life of Moses.
- C. Moses was an unusual man of God.
  - 1. The only one to whom God spoke "face to face." Exodus 33:11
  - 2. The only one God called into His presence for a number of days. Ex. 19
  - 3. The only one whose face shone from spending time with God. Exodus 34:29-35
  - 4. The only one to whom God showed his "back." Exodus 34:18-23
  - 5. The only one through whom God gave the Old Testament structure of the Kingdom of God in the theocracy. Exodus and Leviticus
- D. Moses may be a mirror of grace for us. If we will are willing to "look."

## I. The Threefold Biblical Context for Understanding Moses.

- A. The reality of the spiritual world.
  - 1. Examples: Ex. 12:12; Job 1,2; Matt 6:33; Luke 11:20; Eph 2:2,3; 6:12.
  - 2. Illustration:

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." II Corinthians 6:17,18

B. The one divine plan of our Father: the exalting of Jesus Christ.

1. Examples: Genesis 3:15; Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 42:1 et al; John 14:13; Matt. 17:5; Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 1:13-19; 2:9,10.

2. Illustration:

"And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him." Colossians 1:18,19

C. History, events and decisions as meaningful whether corporate or personal.

1. Examples: Jeremiah 17:10; Matthew 5:23,24; 11:20-24; Luke 19:41-44; Romans 14:12; I Corinthians 3:8; II Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 22:12.

2. Illustration:

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

Comment: These three principles are clearly seen in the life and person of Moses.

A. His life can only be understood when viewed through the eyes of "faith."

Moses is the battleground of two powerful kingdoms.  
Exodus 12:12; 17:8

B. His life exemplifies his preference for the Lord Jesus.

In his most critical moment he asked to be shown God's "way."  
Exodus 33:13

C. His life is an illustration of meaningful and powerful choices.

He accepted leadership and used it authoritatively.  
Exodus 14:21; 32:7-14

## II. The Divine Commentary: God's Commendation -- Hebrews 11:24-29

The significance of this passage can hardly be missed. No other believer is given such a lengthy and pointed commendation as Moses. These verses pull aside the curtain and allow us to look into the spiritual world in which he was so deeply involved. They are presented to us as a divinely prescribed "show and tell." If we desire to walk with God this commentary tells us how to do it. If we choose not to walk with God, in some area of our life or service, then this passage and others will be the basis of an evaluation by our Heavenly Father, where we will be, at the very least, deeply ashamed (John 12:46-48; I John 2:28).

### A. Moses preferred the Lord Jesus to Honor.

"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, **refused** to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Hebrews 12:24

1. The unusual opportunity: "The son of Pharaoh's daughter."
2. The unusual directive: "Moses thought ... God was using him ...."  
Acts 7:25
3. The unusual response: "By faith Moses ... refused ...daughter."

Comment: Honor, to Moses, was perhaps even more of a controlling factor in life than it is with us. He had everything to gain by remaining "The son of Pharaoh's daughter" and everything (naturalistically speaking) to lose by refusing that position. It has been said that Moses may have been in line for the throne. "Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was **powerful** in speech and action."  
Acts 7:22

Honor, acclaim, attention, control, "clout," **power** -- may very well be the main idol we worship in America. We see the demonic control behind this idol everywhere in our culture. As a people we will do almost anything for **power**. We must pray and work together so our refusal of such honor, with its bondage, may be as complete as it was with Moses.

## B. Moses preferred the Lord Jesus to Pleasure.

"He **chose** to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time." Hebrews 11:25

1. His choice involved refusing many years of fame, fun, favor, and fulfillment.
2. His "pleasure" may not have been all "beach parties." (Acts 7:22)
3. His choice reveals a work of divine grace. "... He decided ...." Acts 7:23

Comment: While sin, by definition, may be unbelief, its basic characteristic is self-centeredness. And the heart of self-centeredness is personal pleasure. That is the reason why psychological hedonism cannot be refuted rationally. It would seem that the basic, all-controlling and powerful motivation of life -- is simply -- personal enjoyment. We do what we want to do!

Moses made a clear-cut choice to go against this dominating bondage in his life. Of course it was in cooperation with the grace of God. Without divine grace he would have remained in bondage. Have we responded to that level to grace in our lives? We often practice grace within the confines of our personal bondage.

## C. Moses preferred the Lord Jesus to Riches.

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

1. How can we understand a priority of disgrace over treasure?
2. His choice reveals the power of grace and the spiritual world.
3. God called him, and calls us, to a radical revision of values.

Comment: How clearly the choice of Moses reveals the words of the Lord Jesus, "You cannot serve both God and money!" Matthew 6:24

Much of our frustration, discontent, bondage and lack of growth can be traced to living out of harmony with our Savior's statement. We must consider the choice of Moses as our example. And, it would help to remind ourselves that he also had a family, daily needs, and a future. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with money, the error is "loving" it -- more than the Lord Jesus. (I Timothy 6:10)

#### **D. Moses preferred the Lord Jesus to Security.**

"By faith he **left** Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible." Hebrews 11:27

1. By doing what he thought was the will of God placed Moses in danger.
2. His response was to trust the Lord Jesus -- in spite of his confusion.
3. The resultant events produced a Moses with a character of "meekness."

Comment: The events reflected in this verse may have been the most difficult for Moses to understand and cope with. When we choose to act on what appears to be the will of God, and are soundly defeated, we tend to ask "Where is God?" Moses was surely not above such a response.

There are many times when our Lord asks us to believe that He is the God of light and truth and yet to walk in darkness and confusion. These verses reveal how the Lord Jesus was far more concerned about how Moses was on the inside than He was that Moses should serve Him.

#### **E. Moses preferred the Lord Jesus to Reason.**

" By faith he **kept** the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel." Hebrews 11:28

1. The wisdom of the spiritual world transcends the wisdom of human reason.
2. On the surface the Passover related poorly to the threat of death.
3. The purity of Moses' faith is evidenced in his simple obedience.

Comment: The greatest compliment that we can give our Lord is that we trust Him -- when we have no tangible reason to do so.

If Moses had not learned to trust the Lord Jesus, in those early years of his life, he would not have been able to serve Him adequately when the more serious problems surfaced. We cannot comprehend the difficulties of leading 600,000 unorganized and complaining men, with their families and herds, from the slavery of Egypt, through a desert, into a land already inhabited by a warlike type of people. If we could ask Moses how he did it, his answer would probably be, "I just trusted God and did what He told me to do."

#### **F. Moses preferred the Lord Jesus to Safety.**

"By faith the people **passed** through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned." Hebrews 11:29

1. How responsible Moses must have felt for all the men, women, and children.
2. There was danger everywhere: the Egyptian army, people, and the Red Sea.
3. Moses looked through the circumstances and saw God.

Comment: As we survey the life of Moses, and read this long list of divine commendations, we begin to grasp an unusual truth. It is that Moses was constantly aware of the presence of God and His voice of instruction. While Moses was not a robot who had to be told what to do every moment, he was a man of God, who had taken God at His Word. When he had asked "How can I do what You are asking of me?" The Lord's answer was simply "I'll be with you." (Exodus 3:12; 33:14)

Is your provision and mine any different or less? The answer is "No." While we have not been given the task the Lord gave Moses, the resource of His abiding and available presence is as real today, for every sensitive and obedient believer, as it was then, Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 13:5,6. Far too often we live a very sub-normal Christian life.

### **III. The Divine Counsel: The Priority of the Spiritual World.**

A. Biblical faith has a primary basis: God as a Person.

"... Trust in God, trust also in me." John 14:1 (See Acts 27:24; Romans 4:21)

B. Biblical faith has a secondary basis: The Word of God.

"Faith comes from hearing the message ... the word of Christ."  
Romans 10:17

C. Biblical faith is defined: Taking God at His Word.

"Being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised." Romans 4:21

D. Biblical faith is explained.

1. Faith is a decision which issues in action.

"Faith, by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."  
James 2:17

2. Faith is a decision to mix the Word of God with faith and make the application to life in the attitude of trusting God.

"The message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith." Hebrews 4:2  
(See Numbers 13,14)

**Conclusion:**

- A. God expects us to respond to Him in the obedience of trust -- as He expected Moses to respond to Him.
- B. The grace and power of God can only be released as we take God at His Word and obey Him in faith.
- C. What would have happened to Moses if he had said, "I don't think this is going to work."?
- D. What is going to happen to you? The answer is related to the degree you prefer the Lord Jesus. He is asking you to make Him number 1 in everything.

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