

By faith Moses...

Hebrews 11:24-28

How do you visualize a man or a woman of great faith today? What do they do that inspires you? In Hebrews 11 we find a list of men and women of faith. In it we encounter well-known names such as Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Rahab. Also lesser known names, even people whose names only God knows. Each person has been placed by God Himself in this 'hall of fame' of heroes of faith. Reading this chapter will help us 'recalibrate' our understanding of what it means to be a man or a woman of faith. Try it!

The term 'believer' is Biblical. But I often avoid it. Why? Because every human-being is a 'believer' in something. What makes a true Christian unique is not that he or she is a 'believer', but the content of their faith. How did Moses show his faith?

1. Moses refused... *"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter"* (v.24). Part of following the Lord Jesus is saying 'no' to sin. To serve the Lord effectively, we will also need to learn to say 'no' to good things that take up too much of our time, energy or resources, things that distract us. Both are mentioned in Hebrews 12:1. In order to run well, we are encouraged to "throw of *everything that hinders* and the *sin* that so easily entangles".

2. Moses chose... *"He chose to be ill-treated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin"* (v.25). The Christian life does not consist of avoiding sin. Following Jesus is something positive. We must also learn to say 'yes' to the right things. The direction of our life is determined by the large and mostly small daily choices that we make.

3. Moses looked ahead... *"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"* (v.26). Moses 'looked ahead' and what he saw influenced his values and priorities. What 'reward' did Moses have in mind? Likely the Promised Land. But like David and many others, Moses also had eternity in view, "with eternal pleasures at your right hand" (Ps 16:11). Does your view of eternity affect your values and choices?

You probably know that because Moses disobeyed God he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land (Num 20:6-13). With God there is forgiveness. That is very good news! But sometimes our sin will have lasting consequences on earth. Close to 1500 years

later, "Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus" on the mount of transfiguration (Luk 9:30). God Himself brought Moses into the Promised Land! What a beautiful reminder of God's grace!

4. Moses persevered... *"By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw Him who is invisible"* (v.27). The first time Moses left Egypt he was afraid. He had just killed an Egyptian. Forty years later Moses left Egypt in a different way. The Lord was with him. He was bold. He was no longer afraid.

The following 40 years leading the Israelites in the desert were difficult years. The people often complained. He faced external and internal attacks. Nowhere do I read of anyone thanking Moses for his hard work. How did Moses persevere? We are told that he "saw Him who is invisible". Yes, at the burning bush, at the top of Mount Sinai and in the Tent of Meeting. But, by faith, he learnt to live and depend daily on His presence: "If your Presence does not go with us" said Moses to the Lord, "do not send us up from here" (Ex. 33:15).

If you are to persevere in your marriage, in bringing up your children, in serving others, in living out your calling or ministry, even persevere in worship, you must also learn to 'see' Him who is invisible. If we are to run with perseverance the race marked out for us, we must fix "our eyes on Jesus" (Heb 12:2).

5. Moses celebrated... *"By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel"* (v.28). On the day before the Israelites were due to leave Egypt, each family was told to kill a lamb, apply its blood to the doorposts of their house, "and when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Ex 12:13). This had never happened before. By faith Moses and the Israelites obeyed and were spared. Their salvation did not depend on the intensity of their faith but on the power of the blood. That principle holds also for you and me today.

Unlike the other Jewish feasts, instructions for the celebration of the Passover were given to Moses while he was still in Egypt. At this stage he only had the promise of deliverance. By faith Moses and the Israelites celebrated this first Passover. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper, 'by faith' we look back and rest on a completed work. And 'by faith' we look forward and "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes"(1 Cor 11:26).

By faith Moses made good choices, persevered and even celebrated. May we too!