

*The following sermon was preached at Redemption Baptist Church on Sunday, 10 April 2022. We encourage you to look up the Scriptures that are referenced, and see the context for yourself. May the Lord speak to your heart as you study His Word.*

## **Forsaking All, I Trust Him**

### **Hebrews 11:27-28**

Over the years of my Christian life, there have been a lot of simple little “Christian sayings” that I have heard from pastors and teachers; and they have always stuck in my mind. For example, far back in my childhood, I heard that the word “**JOY**” stands for “**J**esus, **O**thers, and **Y**ou.” Those three little words have stuck in my mind ever since then; and I have found them to be true. I have found, by experience, that true joy comes only when Christ is first in my life; when others are second; and when I am last.

This morning, I would like to introduce you to another one of those wise little sayings that I have picked up along the way. I hope that it will stick in *your* head, too, and that you will prove it to be true in your own life. It’s an acrostic for the word “faith.” **FAITH** means ‘**F**orsaking **A**ll, **I** Trust **H**im.’”

This morning, I would like to point out two aspects of faith. The first aspect is “**forsaking**” (that’s the “forsaking all” part of faith); and the second aspect is “**embracing**” (that’s the “I trust Him” part of faith). A Christian who is living by faith will forsake certain things in his life; and he will also embrace certain things. *Moses* forsook and embraced certain things; and the things that he forsook, and the things he embraced, are the very things *we*, as Christians living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, should be forsaking and embracing, as well. It is my prayer that, as you are challenged from God’s Word this morning, those things that you should be forsaking will be made manifest, and that the things that you should be *embracing* will become dearer and more precious to you than they have ever been before.

The title of this message is ***Forsaking All, I Trust Him.***

### **Read Hebrews 11:27-28.**

In these verses, Paul points out two important truths about faith. First of all,

#### **I. Faith requires a forsaking (v. 27).**

It is interesting that, of all the acts of faith Paul could have selected from *Moses’* life, he chose this one: “***By faith, Moses forsook Egypt.***” Why is this significant? Because there are certain things, in Scripture, that *always* have a bad symbolism attached to them: and this is one of them. **The serpent** is always a picture of Satan, and of sin; **leaven** is always a picture of festering, growing, contaminating sin within the heart; and **Egypt** is always a picture of *the world* (or the flesh). “Can anything good come out of Egypt?” In Bible symbolism, “No”!

Every generation of believers can look back at *Moses’* life and see, in his leaving Egypt, a picture of God’s people leaving and forsaking the world. The Bible warns us, again and again, that the world system is under the control of the wicked one. As the Apostle John put it, “***We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.***” The world is filled with

lust, lies, greed, fornication, adultery, idolatry, covetousness, and every unclean and rebellious imagination that exults itself against God. These are the things that unregenerate men and women seek after; but they should *not* characterise God's children! James said "***What? Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?***" As God's people, we should *not* love the world.

**Read 1 John 2:15-17.**

We who are saved are *in* the world; but we are not *of* it. Nonetheless, we often do look longingly back at the things of the world, don't we? *Why* do we do so? Does the world have some kind of irresistible power over us? No, those who are in Christ *can* resist the world. The problem is that we still have that old flesh inside of us; and if we do not put it to death daily by the power of the Holy Spirit, our hearts will be drawn back to the world.

Moses had a fleshly problem in his life, too; and God had to deal with that flesh, and uproot it, before He could use Moses. You see, there were *two* times in Moses' life when he left Egypt; but he left, on these two occasions, for two entirely different reasons. Let's examine the first time he left Egypt.

**Read Exodus 2:11 - 3:1.**

Is this the time in Moses' life that Paul is setting forth as an example to us? Is this the time when Moses, by faith, "***forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king?***" No, it isn't! When Moses fled Egypt on *this* occasion, he was *very much* driven by fear of the king. This was not a departure of faith; it was a departure of fear. He had good reason to fear, too. He had, without consulting God, acted in his own fleshly pride and anger, and had committed a great sin. Without God's leading or commission, he had killed an Egyptian taskmaster. What may have begun as righteous indignation quickly turned into fleshly anger; and as the result, Moses stepped outside of God's will, and murdered a man.

**Read Acts 7:22-25.**

Do you see what the problem was? Moses was out of Egypt; but "Egypt" wasn't out of Moses. God had to get Egypt *out of* Moses! God had to *purge* Moses. You see, there were fleshly impulses in Moses that had been fostered in Egypt. Yes, he knew and worshipped the true God; he knew the Scriptures; and he rightly perceived that God had placed him in very special circumstances so that he could lead Israel out of Egypt. God had allowed him to be brought up in Pharaoh's court so that he could learn valuable skills. The problem was that he had the "book learning" and talent: but he had not yet learned humility. "Don't they realise that I am to be their deliverer?" was Moses' attitude. Not seeking God's leading, he acted in fleshly anger and self-will. Therefore, God had to move Moses into "stage 2" of His training process. For forty years, Moses had learned skills: now, for another forty years, he had to learn that he was *nothing*.

Now, we are going to fast forward through those next forty years. When we open up to **Exodus 4**, we find a very different, altered Moses.

### Read Exodus 4:10-15.

After forty years of dealing with sheep in a hot, desert wasteland, Moses was not the same man he had been before. His skills of rhetoric (possibly even his fluency in the Egyptian language) weren't so great anymore; and Moses readily said so. This is *exactly* where God wanted him to be. He wanted Moses to realise that of himself, he could do nothing. He wanted Moses to realise that he did *not* have what it took! This is exactly where God wants *you* to be, too. This is one of the last truths that Christ reminded His disciples of on the night before He was crucified.

### Read John 15:1-5.

If God is ever going to use your life, Christian, you must realise that you can do nothing. God's measuring stick for a man is not giftedness, but *humility*. God doesn't use talent; He uses *submission* and *faithfulness*.

Now, maybe you're thinking, "Yep. You're absolutely right, Pastor. I just can't do anything. I don't have any talent. I didn't have the advantages when I was growing up. That's why I can't do much for the Lord. I can't witness to my friends. I just can't seem to conquer that sinful habit. I can't give as I should. I just don't have the smarts to memorise Scripture, or to teach it to anyone. I'll just sit over here in my corner and let everyone else do the work." Brethren, this is "stinkin' thinkin'." The attitude "**I can't**" is just as fleshly as the attitude "**I can**"!

Now, perhaps, at this point, some of you are thinking, "Wait a minute, Pastor! If we aren't supposed to say "I can," and we're also not supposed to say "I can't," then what *are* we supposed to say?" The answer to this question can be found in **Philippians 4:13**. Paul said, "***I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.***" Of yourself, you can do nothing: but with the power of Christ upon you, you can confound the wise and the mighty. You must let go of *self*, let go of *self-confidence*, and let *Christ* have the reins in your life.

As it turns out, Moses spoke to Pharaoh, and to the children of Israel, with great authority and power. Many would argue that Moses was a great speaker; yet, according to Moses himself, he *wasn't* a great speaker at all. Aaron, his brother, had great *natural* speaking ability; but Moses' ability came straight from *God*. When Moses went back to Egypt to confront Pharaoh, Moses was no longer in charge. *Jehovah* was in charge.

This brings us to the time in Moses' life that Paul is talking about in **Hebrews 11:27**. What was the time in Moses' life when he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, and endured, because he was able to "see," by faith, Him who is invisible? It was the time, after forty years of humbling, when Moses went back to the court of Pharaoh with the power of God upon him, and then led the children of Israel out of Egypt. In the desert, with no one to sustain him but God, he had learned to be a sheep, following the leading of the Good Shepherd; and now, he was prepared to be a shepherd to Israel. He could not reach this point until he had forsaken Egypt *in his heart*.

Brethren, we cannot have true faith without “forsaking” the world. The Greek word for “forsake” here in **verse 27** is *katelipen*. It doesn’t mean merely “to leave”; it means to forsake permanently, or to abandon, with no intention of returning. That is exactly the kind of “forsaking” that Jesus was talking about when He said, **“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33)**. The calling of every child of God is to forsake sin; to forsake self; to forsake pride; to forsake self-will; to forsake the things of this world; and, instead, to follow Christ. Jesus never sugar-coated this message.

**Read Luke 9:61-62.**

These words are sobering; and the reason these words are sobering is that we have *all* been guilty of looking longingly back to the world. Is Jesus saying that if a Christian *ever* look back to the world, he will be lost? Is He saying that if a Christian *ever* allow the flesh to have the victory, he will be cast out of the Kingdom? No, that isn’t what He is saying. (If this *were* what Jesus was saying, I’d have been kicked out of the Kingdom a long time ago!) The Bible makes it clear that those who are saved are in God’s Kingdom forever, and are kept by the power of God. We who are saved will not ever be *removed* from God’s Kingdom. However, we *can* be **“out of place”** in God’s kingdom. That is what Jesus is telling us here. The Greek word for **“fit”** has the idea of **“appropriate”** or **“well-placed.”** In other words, a worldly-minded Christian is like a wrong-shaped pattern in a piece of clothing. A carnal Christian is ill-placed, and unfit. He doesn’t “fit” into the pattern. Why? Because in God’s Kingdom, His people are to conform to *His* pattern.

How about it, Christian? Are you allowing God to conform you to His pattern? In order to be “well-fit” in God’s Kingdom, there must be a continual forsaking of sin in your life. From the very start of Jesus’ earthly ministry, He boldly declared, **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel.”** This is the condition upon which we are forgiven of our sin, and received into the Kingdom of God (the spiritual realm of all who are born again)! Faith and repentance are like two sides of the same coin. You can’t have one without the other. If a man truly believe on Christ for salvation, then he will also *repent*. He will turn, in his heart, from sin, and will allow Christ to take the throne of his life, so that Christ can *cleanse his heart* from sin. Repentance should be a characteristic of the Christian from the moment of salvation and onward. A true Christian cannot be happy until he confesses any known sin in his heart, and gets back into a right walk with his Saviour.

That is why a person who *claims* to be a Christian, and who even seems to have a “right sounding” testimony, but who has never experienced a change in heart, a change of direction, a change of passion (from loving sin to loving God), and a turning from worldly desires to godly desires, is not a true child of God. Those whose hearts have *always* been in Egypt, and who have *never left* Egypt, do not know Him.

Such was true of most of the congregation of Israel. In **Acts 7:39**, Stephen pointed out that the children of Israel **“would not obey”** God’s man, Moses, but instead **“thrust him out,”** and **“in their hearts turned back into Egypt.”** Similarly, a lot of people today have *pretended* to bow the knee to God’s Son, Jesus Christ (and maybe even have convinced *themselves* that they are

His disciple): but the reality is that in their hearts, they reject Him. They have always cherished their sinful, selfish ways, and have never turned from them.

**Has there been a forsaking of sin in your life?** Has there ever been a time when you began to abhor and loathe your sin, and when you desired to be freed from sin's power? Has there been a time when you realised that because of your sin, you were condemned to hell, and that you needed Christ's forgiveness? Has there been a time when you stopped trusting in your own worthless good works, and when you realised that Jesus paid the price for your sins? Has there been a time when you trusted *Jesus* to save you, and when, with your mouth, you confessed your sin to Him, and asked Him to come into your heart? If not, today is the day to get it taken care of. You have Heaven to gain, and hell to lose!

If you are saved, you have already turned to Christ in repentance at some point in your life. However, is your daily life characterised by continual repentance and abandonment of sin? Are there elements of Egypt in your heart that need to be weeded out—sinful ways of thinking, sinful habits, or just plain lack of submission to God's will? If so, now is the time to get right with Him!

## II. Faith requires an embracing (v. 28).

(Read Hebrews 11:28 again.) Throughout the Bible, true faith is always coupled with repentance. And what is repentance? On one hand, repentance is the turning *from* something. (We've already seen this!) However, repentance is also turning *to* something. Repentance is turning from sin *to God*. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9, Paul recounted how the Thessalonian believers had turned "***to God from idols, to serve the living and true God.***" To turn *from* sin is also to turn *to* God; and to turn "to God" is to place your *faith* in Him.

That is exactly what Moses did when he "***kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood.***" By keeping the Passover, Moses was *embracing* something--or, rather, *Someone*. If you go back to the book of **Exodus** and look at God's instructions for the Passover, you'll find that the Passover was to be performed "***in haste.***" According to **Exodus 12:11**, the Israelites were to have their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hand; and they were to eat in haste. Why? Because they were to be ready to *leave (or forsake)* Egypt that very night. Yet, at the same time, they were also to *embrace* something. They were to embrace the *Passover Lamb* as their means of deliverance from death. They were to slay a perfect, spotless lamb; wipe its blood on the doorposts of their houses; roast the lamb with fire; and eat all of it that night.

All this is a beautiful picture of salvation. In **John 1:29**, John the Baptist introduced Jesus as "***the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.***" *Jesus* is that perfect, spotless Lamb whose blood was shed for us. *He* is that perfect, spotless Lamb, who went through the fire of God's judgment in order to pay the penalty for our sins in our place. *Christ* is that spotless Lamb who, if a man will "eat His flesh, and drink His blood," will live forever. Spiritual life and nourishment come from a personal relationship with *Jesus the Messiah*.

Did Moses understand all these things when he ate the Passover? Probably not. However, I believe that he had more understanding of it than we might think. The Old Testament saints had enough revelation to understand that the Messiah would somehow suffer and die for us. In Moses' heart, he wasn't blindly following some "magic formula" in order to avoid the death of his firstborn son; he was appropriating his faith in God Himself—not only to spare his firstborn, and to redeem the nation of Israel from bondage, but also to deliver his own soul from eternal destruction. He surely must have known that somehow, his own soul's salvation was being pictured by this Passover Feast. By faith, he carried out this outward ritual, which symbolised the time in his own life when he had forsaken the world, and had placed his faith in God to save him from his sin.

As I close this morning, I would point out one more thing. Let's read **verse 28** one more time. (**Read Hebrews 11:28.**) You'll notice that at the end of **verse 28** Paul said, "*lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.*" Who is this "destroyer"? Let's take a look at **Exodus** again, and find out.

**Read Exodus 12:12-13, 21-23.**

Look carefully at what we've just read. In **verse 12**, the LORD told Moses that *He* would smite the firstborn of the Egyptians. Yet, in **verse 23**, the LORD promised that when He came to a house with the blood over the doorpost, He would not "*suffer*" (or "allow") "*the destroyer to come in unto*" that house to smite them. Who really *was* the Destroyer, then? If God would not allow "the Destroyer" to destroy the firstborn of the Hebrews, then how could *God* be the Destroyer? Wouldn't "the Destroyer" have to be someone other than the LORD? No, the "Destroyer" was, clearly, the LORD Himself. God told Moses that *He* would smite Egypt's firstborn children. Yet, in practically the next breath, God spoke as though "the Destroyer" were *another* person, who was in submission to Him. What are we to make of this?

I believe we can find the answer to this question in **John 5**. Let's take a look at what Jesus said to the Pharisees when they accused Him of "breaking the Sabbath."

**Read John 5:15-30.**

My friends, do you realise how powerful these words are? According to this passage, **Jesus Christ** is the one who holds the keys of life and death! It is *He* who is the Destroyer. When Jesus appeared to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos, He said, "*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*" Yet, at the same time, Jesus Christ is also the Saviour. It is He who has the power to *save us* from eternal death and destruction.

It is Jesus Christ who will, along with His Father, judge the world one day. Without the Father, He does nothing. They do everything together. Yet, though they are equal in power, glory, and essence, Jesus is always in *submission* to His Father. It is Jesus Christ (along with His Father) who destroyed the firstborn of Egypt that night; but it is also Jesus Christ (along with His Father) who *passed over* the homes with the blood that night.

It is Jesus Christ (along with the Father) who will one day judge all who have rejected Him, and will cast them into the Lake of Fire; and it is He (along with His Father) who will *not* condemn those who have placed their trust in His atoning blood.

Now, to most of the professing “Christian” world (not to mention the non-Christian world), this is a highly offensive statement. “You mean Jesus would destroy someone? I thought Jesus was all about love and compassion, and helping your neighbour! Surely Jesus wouldn’t send anyone to hell!” They fail to understand who the true Jesus is. They fail to understand that Jesus *is* the righteous Judge of all the earth, and that He cannot simply sweep sin under the rug. The Jesus who came to *save* men’s lives is the same Jesus who must judge sin. He *will* burn the chaff with unquenchable fire!

Yet, this same righteous Judge, who must punish sin, is willing to pardon and forgive all who will place their trust in Him. His precious blood saves us from death and hell. That’s why He came to earth. He came as the Lamb of God, to shed His precious blood for us, so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin. Christ *is* our Passover Lamb!

Before we close this morning, let’s look at one more passage.

**Read John 19:14-18, 30-36.**

Jesus died on the very day of Passover, and at the very hour when the Passover lambs began to be slaughtered in the Temple. Just as the Passover lamb was not permitted to have a bone of its body broken, so not one bone of Jesus’ body was broken. He died as our sinless Passover Lamb, so that the “leaven” of sin might be removed from our hearts, and so that we might be made a “*new lump*” in Christ. The Bible says, “***Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.***”

When Jesus cried “***It is finished,***” He was declaring that the payment for sin had been made in full. Salvation is offered fully and freely. However, it must be received, on our part, by faith in Christ alone, plus nothing else. Faith requires a forsaking of sin; but it also requires an embracing--an embracing of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

**Conclusion:** The same God who destroyed much life on that awful night in Egypt more than 3,500 years ago also *spared* much life that night. To this day, He is still saving souls from sin, death, and hell. *Moses* placed His trust in Christ 1,500 years before Christ came down into this world to be born; and because he trusted in the Messiah, he was spared God’s judgment.

Have *you* placed your trust in Christ for your soul’s *salvation*? There is no other Way to Heaven but Jesus. Trying to be a good person, or a religious person, won’t cut it. You aren’t good enough to earn God’s favour. If God gave you a hundred lifetimes to earn His favour, you still couldn’t be good enough. It takes only one sin to separate us from God eternally; and not one sin that you have ever done can be negated or erased by any effort of your own. The only thing that can wash away sin is the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Should you be trusting in religion, or rituals, or your own goodness to get you to Heaven, I plead with you to *stop* trusting in these things, and place your trust in Christ’s saving blood.

If you *are* saved, you have already trusted Christ for your salvation. Won't you trust Him now with your *whole life*? Won't you ask the Lord to *increase* your faith, so that you can please Him? Won't you turn from every worldly, fleshly desire, and turn yourself *wholly* to your Saviour, so that He can do with your life what *He* will? Will you, with your whole heart, say, "Forsaking All, I Trust Him"?