

The following sermon was preached at Redemption Baptist Church on Sunday, 25 October 2026. 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.

The Walk of Faith

Esther 5:1-8

In 1815, a 20-year-old Scotsman named Robert Moffat, who had grown up in church all his life, but had never truly been saved, understood the Gospel for the first time; and he repented of his sin, and believed on Christ as Saviour. Immediately after his salvation, the Lord placed in his heart the desire to be a missionary to Africa; and he began to train for the ministry. A year later, in 1816, he left his family and friends, and made an 86-day voyage to Cape Town, to begin his calling. Three years later, his fiancée, Mary, was able to make the trip to South Africa, where they were joined in marriage, and in the ministry.¹

Now, at first, the Lord's hand seemed to be evident in Moffat's labours—especially when he led a notorious bandit and cattle-rustler named Jager Afrikaner to the Lord, and baptised him. However, after Robert and his wife moved to Kuruman, in modern-day Botswana, they entered into a long, hard season of missionary labour. For one thing, they endured much physical privation. He and his wife often went without food, or even water, for days; and the ministry was just as parched and dry as the climate was. Now, it's not that Robert wasn't getting important things accomplished. Over the years, Moffat managed to translate the *entire Bible* into the Sechwana language—as well as *Pilgrim's Progress*. This was an amazing accomplishment, since Sechwana didn't even have words for such things as “book,” “reading,” “writing,” or “pencil.” He had to invent mountains of new Sechwana words in order to translate the Bible. He virtually built the Sechwana written language from scratch, and wrote grammars for it. He also taught people how to read and write.² However, there was one problem: *no one was getting saved*. After ten years had gone by without a single convert, their missionary society in London began to question whether they should continue the work there in Botswana. The Moffats were grieved by this letter; but they were sure that Kuruman was where they were supposed to be, and that God would bring fruit in due season. For two more years they plodded on, with still no converts.³

Well, one day they received a letter from a friend in England, who asked the Moffats if there were anything that they would like her to send to them. They wrote back and asked her to send them a communion set, because they were sure that God would soon give them a congregation. (They were “preparing for rain”!) It was after they made this request that the very first Sechwana received Christ as Saviour; and soon, five others followed. In the coming months, they went through the process of discipling these six new believers, until they were prepared to receive baptism and church membership. They now had a small congregation; and they began to plan to take the Lord's Supper. They set a date for it; but as the weeks dragged on, they still had no communion set. (The communion set had been delayed in the post even longer than usual.) However, it arrived the day *just before* their first Lord's Supper!⁴

Brethren, God's blessings are waiting in the wings; but we cannot expect to see His blessings until we step out on faith. We often *use* the phrase "step out on faith": but do we really understand what this means? To "step out on faith" means to prepare for something that doesn't seem to be forthcoming. To "step out" implies that you take a *definite action*, with the full belief that this thing is God's will (even though the thing you're expecting looks impossible, and even foolhardy). That is exactly what Esther did. She believed that God wanted her to go before King Ahasuerus to make a petition for her people; but she literally had to *take the first step* toward the throne room—and then another, and another. She literally had to walk by faith! The title of this morning's message is ***The Walk of Faith***.

Read Esther 5:1-8.

I. The faith of Esther (5:1a)

Every believer in Jesus Christ has, at many points in his life, been faced with the question, **"How can I know what God wants me to do in this situation?"** Oftentimes we must walk through dark valleys, where things look uncertain and hazy, and where God's will seems unclear. However, sometimes the problem isn't that God hasn't *revealed* His will: the problem is that *we don't want to accept* God's will. God has shown us through His Word, and through the quiet voice of His Holy Spirit, what He wants us to do; yet, His will looks impossible to us. Therefore, we keep waiting for God to give us another answer.

If you've been saved for very long at all, you know exactly what I'm talking about. There have been times in your life when you have asked God to show you what to do; but you were not really praying **"in Jesus' name."** I'm not talking about tacking the words **"in Jesus name, Amen"** onto the end of your prayers: I'm talking about *praying according to His will*.

Read John 16:23-24.

Read 1 John 5:14-15.

Brethren, to pray **"in Jesus' name"** doesn't merely mean to utter the *words* **"in Jesus' name"** (as though they were magic words), so that you can get whatever *you* want. When you pray **"in Jesus' name,"** it means that you are praying "by Jesus' *authority*." It means that Jesus can attach His royal name and authority to your request, because your request is in line with *His* will. It means that *your* desire and *Christ's* desire are the same, because you are truly

delighting yourself in *Him*. It means that you have allowed Christ to place *His* desires in your heart; and therefore, you can make your request with the confidence that you are praying according to *His* will. **Psalm 37:4** says, ***“Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”*** When you delight yourself in the LORD, He gives you the desire that *He* wants you to have, and you embrace that desire—even if the thing that God wants you to do looks impossible and frightening.

When dark times come, how can you know the right path to take? By doing what Esther did—praying earnestly for wisdom! Actually, in her case, she already knew, before she even began to pray, what God wanted her to do. God had used her cousin Mordecai to challenge her to go in before the king; and immediately, in her heart, she knew that this was God’s will. She wasn’t really praying to *find out* what to do: she was praying for the *courage, strength, and protection* to do what God wanted her to do—and for *favour* from King Ahasuerus. She was praying, “Lord, increase my faith, so that I can do your will.” Yet, what if, during those three days, Esther had begun to waver from what she knew God wanted her to do, and had begun to pray instead for God to give her a *different* answer—one that wouldn’t require her to risk her life? She *could* have done this: and I know this from experience, because I myself have been guilty of weakening in my resolve to do God’s will, and of asking God for a *different* answer. (And so have you, Christian!) This is what the Bible calls “waving.”

In **James 1:5**, the Bible says, ***“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”*** This sounds simple enough, right? However, there is one thing that you *must* have when you pray—and that is **faith**. Just as you trusted Christ to save your soul, so you must continue to trust Him with your daily decisions. Faith is simply trusting that what God commands you to do *is* best for you—and that He will give you the power to perform what He has commanded you to do.

Brethren, I can’t look into your hearts to see how much faith you have; and neither can you look into my heart and see *my* faith. The only way that anyone can “see” that you have faith is when he sees you *obeying* the Lord. If you really trust God, then you will do what He commands you to do—even if it be dangerous, or even crazy, in the eyes of others. James went on to say, ***“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”***

Read James 1:5-6.

The believer who asks God for wisdom half-heartedly, without the firm belief that God *can and will* help him, will not receive God’s wisdom when He offers it. Instead, that believer will “waver.” The word ***“wavereth”*** literally means “judging back and forth.” The idea is that the believer is constantly hesitating, staggering, and fluctuating back and forth between listening

to worldly wisdom, and listening to godly wisdom. One minute the believer agrees with God's Word, and begins to obey the Lord; but the next minute, he goes back to carnal thinking, carnal philosophies, and carnal ways of living. The ***"mind of Christ"*** is available to every Christian; but if the believer won't *ask* for Christ's wisdom, he won't have the faith to receive it, or act upon it. Instead, he will be like a ***"wave"*** of the sea that is driven by the ***"wind"*** of worldly and carnal ideas. One minute, he begins to take heed to God's Word, and to go in the right direction; but the next minute, he gives ear to worldly friends, and turns in the other direction. One minute he listens to Christ's life-giving parables in the Scriptures; but the next minute he sits down in front of a cinema or TV screen, and listens to the *world's* corrupt "parables" (otherwise known as "movies," or "entertainment"). The wavering believer may go to church, and sit through a sermon; but he is not really giving heed to ***"reading," "exhortation,"*** and ***"doctrine"***; and he is not growing up together with the rest of the church body, into spiritual maturity. Therefore, he remains in spiritual infancy, and is ***"carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."*** To the wavering believer, the teaching of God's Word is like a ***"lovely song,"*** or like the sound of a ***"pleasant voice,"*** or of a beautiful ***"instrument"***; but he doesn't allow the Word to sink down into his heart, and result in a change of mind, will, and direction.

Folks, think about the nature of a "wave." A wave is *constantly* moving! Well, that's what a Christian who doesn't trust God is like. He's not stable, because he doubts that God can take care of him. The big problems in his life are like strong winds that blow him one way, and then another. He starts to do one thing, but then he does another thing, and then another thing, because he literally *doesn't know* what to do, or what to think.

About 300 years before Christ, a Greek man named **Pyrrho** began a school of philosophy called "Pyrrhonism," or "scepticism." While he was a soldier in the army of Alexander the Great, he travelled through many foreign lands; and as he pondered on all the conflicting religions that he encountered, he came to the conclusion that no knowledge can be known for certain—whether it be religious knowledge, moral knowledge, scientific knowledge, or any other kind of knowledge. (In a nutshell, his philosophy was, "You don't know what you don't know.") He said that in "all questions of truth, we must suspend judgment"; and he claimed that this mindset will lead you to a state that he called **"ataraxia"**—"a complete calmness of the soul."⁵ In reality, Pyrrho's agnosticism didn't lead him to calmness: it led him to madness. Not only did he "not know" anything, but he wasn't even *sure* that he didn't know anything! He came to doubt reality, and wondered if the world itself were a giant illusion. When he went on a walk, his friends often walked with him, to make sure that he wouldn't walk over a cliff, because he thought that it was "just an illusion"! One of Pyrrho's students said that everything in this world is "Equally indifferent, and unstable, and indeterminate; and therefore neither our senses nor our opinions are either true or false. For this reason...we must not trust [our senses], but be without opinions, and without bias, *and without wavering*, saying of every single thing that it *no more is* than *is not*, or *both* is and is not, or *neither* is, nor is not."

Folks, if you can tell me what that means, I'll give you a gold star sticker! This is nothing but madness. This is the very definition of "unstable" and "wavering." Yet, this is the way that most people today think. Society has taught us that nothing is "true" or "false," "right" or "wrong": and those who say otherwise (Bible-believing Christians, particularly) are "unstable." However, it's just the opposite. God has not given His people the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind; and anyone who is not building his life upon Christ and His Word is building his life on sinking sand. As Solomon put it, ***"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead."*** Those who depart from the truth of God's Word not only are spiritually dead, and bound for Hell, but even in this life they are like wandering stars, ever learning, yet always doubting, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Even Christians who aren't grounded in God's promises will be like "waves," always tossed and driven back and forth. However, the believer who *trusts* God's promises will be like a strong, healthy tree, with deep roots. When a storm of life blows in, some branches and limbs may fall off his tree; but he will remain standing! He doesn't go crazy with fear, or fall into paralysing depression, or explode with anger. He stays calm, and keeps trusting God to bring him through the problem, because He knows that the Lord has promised, ***"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*** His roots go down deep into the ground, and hold him in place. Because he delights in God's Word, and reads it, and trusts it, he is like a ***"tree planted by the rivers of water."***

Read Psalm 1:1-6.

If you have placed your faith in Christ, you are a child of God for eternity; and nothing can change your royal status. However, if you are not sincerely seeking God's will, you'll be guessing your way through life, and making one bad decision after another. God has a plan for your life that is better than you could ever imagine; but you *must* ask Him to show you *His* plan, and ask Him for the strength to follow it. God showed Esther what to do; and He will show you His will, too, *if* you will resolve in your heart to do His will.

II. The favour shown to Esther (5:1-3)

(Read Esther 5:1-3 again.) After three days of fasting and communing with God, Esther was absolutely confident of what God was calling her to do; and so, she took her first step of faith. First, she put on her royal robes; and then, walking by faith, and not by sight, she *literally* took a step, and then another, and another, until she was standing at the threshold of the inner court.

Now, in recent years, much excavation has been done on the ruins of King Darius's palace; and archaeologists have found that there was a wide corridor that connected Darius's throne room to the "inner court." On the righthand side of the inner court was the "outer court," where formal business was conducted with those who had come to petition the king, through the agency of the king's chamberlains, who went back and forth; but the "inner court" was a more relaxed and private court, where the king met with his most favoured subjects face-to-face—especially with his seven chamberlains, who were always by his side. Now, on the lefthand side of the inner court was the women's court, where the king's wives hung out during the day; and this court was separated from the inner court by a short corridor, which went through a couple small, interconnected chambers. The king's wives were only steps away from the inner court at any given time; and they could be in the king's presence within seconds, whenever the chamberlains called them to come in. Yet, walking through that embroidered curtain into the inner court without being summoned meant swift execution. The king, from his throne, could see directly down the corridor into the inner court; and he would have seen Esther walking through that doorway from the women's court almost instantly. Esther knew the danger she was in; yet, she blew right past all the chamberlains, and stood in the centre of the inner court, at the end of the corridor leading up to the throne!

Can you imagine how shocked the chamberlains must have been to see Esther walk right into the centre of the inner court, without being summoned? They probably thought that Esther was as good as dead! Yet, there she stood bravely and calmly (at least, to all outward appearance). Her heart must have been pounding at 200 beats per minute; and the time between when the king first locked eyes with hers, and when he responded to her, must have seemed like an eternity. Undoubtedly, the guards were ready to seize her at the instant the king gave the word. However, as Ahasuerus looked on his beautiful queen, he slowly lifted that golden sceptre, to indicate his favour; and Esther walked down the corridor, and touched the top of the sceptre. God had spared her life!

King Ahasuerus was probably amazed (and even startled) that Esther had defied the law of the land by coming into his throne room without permission. Yet, he also knew that Esther wouldn't have risked her life in such a dramatic way if she didn't have something serious to ask of him. Therefore he asked her, "What do you want, Queen Esther? And what is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom." Offering to give someone the "half of my kingdom" was a common expression that kings used when they were showing favour to their subjects; yet, even though this was just an expression, it did imply a "blank cheque," of sorts. The king was promising to give Esther whatever she needed. This reminds me of what God promises to His children when they are walking by faith. Let's see what Paul said about this in **Philippians 3**.

Read Philippians 4:14-19.

Philippians 4:19 is a verse that many Christians memorise early in their Christian lives. This is a wonderful promise! God promises to supply **“all”** our need according to His abundant riches in glory. **Ephesians 3:20** says that God is **“able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”**; and **Ephesians 1:3** says that God the Father has **“blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”** Charles Spurgeon called it **“faith’s chequebook.”** It’s as though we had an endless supply of “blank cheques” that are pre-signed by Christ Himself, and that are drawn from an infinite, heavenly bank account of God’s grace; and these cheques may be filled out with all the grace and provision that we need for any situation, if we will only ask Christ to write out the cheque for us. Sometimes the “grace” that we need comes in the form of favour in the eyes of civil authorities, so that God’s people will have protection and free course to do His will on earth (just as Esther received favour from the pagan king Ahasuerus, so that God’s people would be spared from death). Sometimes His grace comes in the form of material provision. (I can testify that God has provided materially for me and my family more times than I can remember; and oftentimes it has come at just the right moment, and in just the right amount.) However, we mustn’t forget the context of this passage: the Philippian believers had *personally sacrificed* to support Paul and his missionary work; and because they had followed God’s leading, and had made this **“sacrifice acceptable,”** God was now promising to meet *their* need. Their sacrifice for the Lord’s work would *not* leave them destitute: God would supply their need. This is called “walking by faith”; and it is the birthright of every believer.

Now, let’s get back to Esther. She had just touched the golden sceptre; and now was her big chance! This was what she had been praying and fasting about for three days. The king had now given her permission to state her request. Surely she would now tell Ahasuerus all about Haman’s evil plot, right? **Actually...no!** God gave Esther the wisdom to realise that this was *not* the right time to tell the king about it. Why *wasn’t* it the right time? Because King Ahasuerus trusted Haman *a lot!* Haman was the king’s right-hand-man, and his most trusted advisor. Haman had put on a good show of being a loyal, humble man, who just wanted to serve the king in any way possible. Esther couldn’t just come out and start making grievous accusations against Haman, or else the king might mistrust her; and she might lose her life! Therefore she said, **“If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.”**

Now, Ahasuerus was very pleased by this! He had probably had a long day of appointments with people, and had had to think about many serious matters: and now, here comes his beautiful queen, offering him a delicious and restful banquet, where he can forget about heavier matters for a while. And so, the king told a servant to go get Haman quickly, so that they could attend Queen Esther’s banquet that very afternoon.

III. The feast hosted by Esther (5:4-8)

(Read Esther 5:4-8 again.) In Bible times, a banquet was an occasion when kings and rulers talked over important matters of business. Obviously, Esther had something important to tell the king during this banquet; and the king knew this very well. He was enjoying the relaxing banquet; but he was also waiting for Esther to tell him what her real request was. Yet, how could she tell the king that his most trusted advisor was a snake? How could she tell the king that Haman was going to murder her cousin Mordecai, herself, and all the Jews? She probably was thinking about this all through the banquet; but she wasn't sure whether it was the right time to speak just yet. Well, the meal finally ended; and Ahasuerus couldn't wait any longer. Once again, he asked Esther what her request was; and once again, Esther's heart was probably beating about 200 beats per minute! Now, I don't know if the words that came out of her mouth were what she had already planned to say, or if God suddenly led her to say something different from what she had originally planned to say; but in any event, the thing that came out of her mouth was *exactly* what God wanted her to say at that time. God gave her a **“mouth, and wisdom”** to know that this *still* was not the time to tell the king what she knew about Haman. She didn't know how, or why; but she just knew. Even though she knew that hundreds of Jewish people were expecting her to speak for them that very day—and even though she realised that she might be harshly criticised for *not* speaking—she chose to do what *the Lord* was leading her to do. And so, she asked the king and Haman to attend yet another banquet, which she would prepare for them the next day.

Christian, there's something you need to know about the way that God speaks. Most likely, God will never speak to you in an audible voice. He'll speak to you *silently*, in your heart. For days, Esther had been patiently praying, and asking God for the strength and courage to do His will; and now, in an instant, God showed her what to do, by putting a strong thought into her mind. This is the same way God works in *our* hearts, too. As you pray, don't expect God to speak out loud, or to give you some big, miraculous, awesome sign. God *can* do miraculous signs; but usually, He doesn't. Just wait patiently on Him; and when it is *His* time, He will quietly put in your heart what He wants you to do. **Psalm 27:14** says, **“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”** “But, Pastor,” you say, “How can I *know* that He is speaking to me?” Here's how.

Read Romans 12:1-2.

At the end of **verse 2**, Paul tells us how we can **“prove”** God's will. That word “prove” means “to discern, examine, or try.” This implies a process—a process of examining the thing that God has placed in your heart, so see if it truly be from Him. But how do you *conduct* this test? What is the litmus test by which you can judge whether this thing be *His* will? First of all, it must agree with what God has written in His Word. God will *never* lead you to do

something that is against His Word! “But, Pastor, what if there are several possibilities, and none of them seem to contradict Scripture? How do I know which one is God’s will?” This is where **Romans 1:1-2** comes in. As you yield yourself as a living sacrifice to God, and seek to be acceptable in His sight, and close your ears to the counsel of the world, and allow God to transform you, and renew your mind, you will have the spiritual sensitivity to *know* when He is speaking. You will recognise the voice of your Shepherd, because you have been carefully listening to His voice all along. Esther knew God’s voice; and as Spirit-indwelt believers, we can know His voice, too. ***“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”***

Conclusion: As we close this morning, I would ask whether you know Christ as your personal Saviour. Has there been a time in your life when you *know* you passed from death unto life, because you repented of your sin, and personally placed your trust in Jesus Christ, and in what He did for you on the cross? If you aren’t sure that there has been such a transformation in your life, I urge you to come forward this morning in this invitation time, and talk with a mature believer, who will take the time to open God’s Word and show you how you can be saved. If you are saved already, I would ask, “Are you walking by faith every day, and not by sight?” If you need to get your eyes back on the Lord, and off the things of this world, please take this time to talk with the Lord, and get right with Him.

¹ Robert Moffat, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Moffat_\(missionary\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Moffat_(missionary))

² *Ibid.*

³ Robert J. Morgan, *Preacher’s Sourcebook of Creative Sermon Illustrations* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007), p. 286.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Morgan, *Preacher’s Sourcebook of Creative Sermon Illustrations*, p. 242.