

A Deeper Walk with God

The Faith of Moses: What You Can Do When You Don't Know What To Do

Rough Transcript

Patrick Morley

Patrick Morley:

Good morning men. Please turn in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 14. We are in this series **A Deeper Walk With God**. I was telling my mentoring partner this week, I just feel like maybe I'm going through a season where I have PTS or something. I don't mean to belittle or the term, but anyway, I just feel like the weight of the fall is a on me in a very heavy way. You or someone you know is probably in the same situation, someone who feels like they are in a dire situation, and I think the reason is by mid season everybody's playing injured. Everybody's got something that they're dealing with by the mid season.

So some people feel like they are in a hopeless situation. They feel like the walls are closing in on them, and so how is it that God provides to resolve these situations or does he? And this is why I appreciate the Bible so much because it's so relevant. It's not a book of theoretical solutions to theoretical problems. It's not a book that's trying to show you how you can create an alternative utopian life. No, the Bible talks about real life situations with real life solutions. So I wrote this question down.

Why is it that most of today's bestsellers will not be read by the next generation, and not only the bestsellers but then millions of other books, why is it that for the most part, the bestsellers of today will not be read by the next generation, and yet these 2000 to 3,500 year old writings that are in the Bible seem to connect with men in every generation? "Meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless," wrote Solomon 3000 years ago, and men pick that up today and feel like it is absolutely connected to their lives today. So here's my answer.

Would a God who is powerful enough to hurl the cosmos into existence not also be powerful enough to create an accurate record of who he is, the relationship he wants with humans, and a roadmap to our daily lives? And so today we're going to look at a little bit of that roadmap that he has for our daily lives and talk about what you can do when you don't know what to do. Before we do that, we're going to have a couple of shout outs as we always do. The first one goes to our area director, Greg Wilkerson, on the south side of Chicago.

Greg is a pied piper, especially with young African American men. I've been up there, spent time with him. He's an incredible human being and has nursed his wife through a very long and difficult illness, just a great human being, and so I want to give him a shout out. And then also this group, their name is "Retired, But Not Too Tired To Grow", 10 guys meeting on Tuesdays at 7:00 AM at St Paul Lutheran Church in Mattson or Madison, Illinois. Dennis Piper is the leader, a group of retired men meeting weekly for Bible study, comradery, and odd fix-it jobs around the church. So would you join me in giving a very warm rousing Man In The Mirror welcome to "Retired Men, But Not Too Tired To Grow". One, two, three. Horrah! Welcome guys. We're glad to have you with us.

Patrick Morley:

AN EPIC MOMENT IN THE HISTORY OF OUR FAITH

The title of the message, **The Faith of Moses: What You Can Do When You Don't Know What To Do.**

And so I want us to begin by just looking at what is an epic moment in the history of our faith, and that's found in this text in Exodus chapter four. Just a little bit about Moses. Moses is in the hall of heroes in Hebrews chapter 11 where the heroes of the faith are described. A great amount of Hebrews 11 is devoted to his life.

Moses, along with Elijah, appeared with Jesus at the transfiguration. Moses is the author of the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, and we read in Exodus chapter 14, I guess I should go there too, we read that the Israelites have found themselves in some very dire straits, a very difficult situation. They're feeling like the walls are closing in on them. And so in chapter 14 verse one, and now what's happened is is they've left their slavery in Egypt and they're now on their way to the promised land, or so they think. And then the Lord, verse one, said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to turn back and," next sentence, "They are to encamp by the sea."

In verse three, "Pharaoh will think the Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert and," this is the Lord speaking, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart and he will pursue them, but I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army. And the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." So the Israelites did this, and then down in verse nine, "The Egyptians, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops," everybody in his entire army, "pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea."

Verse 10, "As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and there were the Egyptians marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone. Let us serve the Egyptians.' It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die here in this desert.'"

So what do you do when you don't know what to do? And so Moses found himself with thinking about this, this incredible army coming against him, his own people in mutiny. And then he's in a geography that has him hemmed in. So he has no where to go, doesn't know what to do, no way out, and God has not given him any direction at this point. What comes next? So what can you do when you don't know what to do? So I would ask you, do you have a situation or do you know someone who has a situation where you feel like you are in dire straits, where they feel like they are in dire straits, the walls are closing in, they don't know what to do, it feels like a hopeless situation, that unless God intervenes like he does as we're about to see and as we already know of course, that unless God intervenes with a display of his glory and his power that you're toast?

So what do we do? What do we say? Well, let's look at what Moses did in the next verse. Verse 13, "Moses answered the people," now remember, he hasn't heard from God yet, "Moses answered the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm. You will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today.'" Verse 14, "The Lord will fight for you. You need only to be still." He doesn't know what to do. God hasn't told him what to do, but he is so absolutely convinced of the character of God and the power of God, and the love and the care of God, and that God has been with him, and that God has called him to do what he's called him to do that even though he doesn't know what he's supposed to do next, he has the confidence to tell the people and the confidence to tell you and to tell me, "Stand firm. Don't be afraid. You will see the deliverance of the Lord. The Lord will fight for you. All you have to do is be still."

And this is not be still like in Psalms because you've got this army coming after you, so something's going to have to happen. And then in verse 15, "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on.'" Now from that verse, we can infer that Moses had no idea that God was

about ready to tell them to move on. He did not know what to do, and then the Lord told him what the next step was, told him to raise his staff and that the waters would part. He did raise his staff. The waters did part. The Israelites went through. They went through on dry land. The Egyptians chased them into the sea. The walls collapsed on the Egyptians. Their wheels got stuck in the mud. The entire Egyptian army perished and God did bring glory to himself exactly like he said that he was going to do.

But Moses didn't know what God was going to do. You don't know what God is going to do next. All you know is that you're in a dire situation or the person you care about is in a dire situation. That's all you know. So how can we be more like Moses? The idea for today, the Big Idea: **Like Moses, I will trust God so much that I never feel like I have to make something happen.** Moses found himself in the most difficult situation humanly possible, short of actually perishing, but he trusted God so much that he did not feel like he had to make something happen.

He said, "Be still, the Lord will deliver you," and so he's saying to us today, and this is the relevance of the Bible for all men and all generations, "Whatever you're going through, whatever situation you're in, no matter how dire it is, stand still. The Lord will deliver you. Trust him, believe in him," and so like Moses, I want to do that. I want to trust God, and I want you to trust God so much that no matter what's going on, no matter how dire it is, I don't feel like I have to make it happen. I've taught this before as letting it happen versus making it happen. Some of you might remember that.

HOW DID MOSES GET TO BE MOSES?

So how did Moses get to be like this? How did Moses get to be Moses? We could look at his life in thirds. So for the first 40 years of his life, he lived in privilege. Some of you have grown up leading privileged lives. Moses got a big ego. He kind of thought that he was going to be the deliverer of his people. Some of you will remember the story. He went out one day and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, a fellow Hebrew. He grew up as a Hebrew but in the Pharaoh's house as a part of the royal family. He saw an Egyptian beating one of his people, a fellow Hebrew. He killed the Egyptian and buried in the sand. He killed a man. Moses killed a guy. He's a murderer.

He thought he was going to be the deliverer of his people. What happened? Pharaoh pursued him and chased him out of the land. He had a big ego and he killed a man. That's what he did with the first third of his life, and then he began the second third of his life. He's out in the wilderness. Some of you will remember from the series and the book, *How God Makes Men*, that I wrote that Moses is one of the characters in that book. And the big idea for the chapter on Moses in *How God Makes Men* is the idea that God makes men by taking us through a humbling process that fundamentally changes the way we think. It changes our worldview.

So he had a big ego, big enough to kill a guy, big enough to think that he was going to be the man, he was going to be the person to deliver his people. So at the moment that Moses thought he was adequate for the vision that he thought God had given him, at the moment you thought that you were adequate for the vision that God had given you, it was built in you, God found him inadequate. God found you inadequate. Why? Because you needed to go through, he needed to go through, I needed to go through a humbling process that fundamentally changed the way he thought. I've been through it. You've been through it. You're going through it. You will go through, might go through it again, depending on how slow you are.

And the idea is that God is changing our worldview, how we... It's the conceptual framework through which we filter our understanding of life and try to have it make sense. And so Moses is now out in the wilderness another 40 years, this is the entire second third of his life, and one day he's just going about his business of tending animals and he sees a bush that's on fire, but not being consumed. He saw his burning bush, and God spoke to him and said out of the burning bush, "I have heard the cries of my people and I am sending you to set my people free."

Something happened through this humbling process in which God fundamentally changed the way that Moses thought so that now Moses thought that he was inadequate for the vision of God. He said, "Oh God, please send somebody else. I can't do that." Six times, "Oh God, I'm not very good at this. Can't you please get somebody else to do this?" At the very moment that Moses thought that he was inadequate for the vision of God, God then found him adequate because of the humbling process through which he had been taken. And that's what that second third of his life was about is becoming a usable vessel for the spirit of God to work, and so he responded.

And then, the third third of his life, or the final third of his life ends up being the title of this series, **A Deeper Walk With God**. He heard the voice of God. He walked humbly with his God. He went where God sent him. He did what God did, and when he didn't know what he was supposed to do next, he knew what to do. What can you do when you don't know what to do? Be still. He understood that. He trusted God with his new worldview, and that's the Big Idea for us. **Like Moses, I will trust God so much that I never feel like I have to make something happen.**

Do you understand how... I mean, I think you do. I mean, but I'm reminding myself this week, "Pat, do you understand what this means?" When's the last time you were reminded of this? Well, it wasn't last year because last year I didn't read the Old Testament. I just read through the New Testament. I need to have this reminder often that when I come to the sea and I don't see a way forward, and I look back and the bill collectors are chasing me or the landlord wants the rent or the mortgage company wants the payment or the payroll is due, and I can't go forward because there's a wall of water there, and when the people that I thought were for me are angry at me because I can't make it happen and, their perception of the worldview, when I don't know what to do, I actually do know what to do. And that's to do nothing except trust the Lord.

He will be your deliverer. Now, does this mean that you, when he reveals that next step, which he did to Moses, that you don't have to take it, that you can just, "Well, God's going to take care of me. I don't have to do anything else"? No. When he tells you to do the next thing, you do the next thing, but you don't have to do the next thing for him to deliver you. You can be still and trust that he will do what he said he'd do. And this, this principle is in Scripture. This ancient document that we're reading today, while the bestseller of 10 years ago, most of the bestsellers of 10 years ago, nobody can even remember what they are called, that's why we're reading these ancient writings because over and over again they give us a real solution to a real problem.

And that is, whatever dire situation we find ourselves in, God is going to deliver us. We can stand firm, we can trust them, we can be still and he will deliver us.

HOW CAN WE TRUST LIKE MOSES?

So how can we trust like Moses? Well, I think the first and foremost is by adjusting our worldview. That's why I want to teach you this four-week series that's coming up called *The Four Voices*, the subtitle of the series is on these cards, *The Four Voices: How To Think Like A Christian*. So changing the worldview is part of it. Of course, we're doing that here every week. We're bringing in ourselves... What we're doing is we're walking out in the world all week long, part of the way that we walk in the world is we walk with a biblical worldview, and then after a few days, a half of a biblical worldview, and then by the end of the week, a quarter of a biblical worldview, and then we come back here because we need to recalibrate, we need to recalibrate.

But I'm going to give you some tools in this series, *The Four Voices*, that will help you on a daily basis, really, actually on a moment-by-moment basis, to be able to think biblically, to think like a Christian. And then I think another way we can trust like Moses is by applying some of the things we've been learning in this series. For example, with regard to our prayers, we learned that God will never give us less than as much as we need. So God will give you anything you ask for in prayer if you believe, and it's within his

will. So that's the upper limit, understanding the upper limit, but I tell you what really has given me this year, because I just learned this principle this year, what's given me more hope about prayer than the upward potential is the lower threshold that he promises not to go below.

I have found more comfort in knowing that God will never give me less than as much as I need than I've found comfort that he's going to give me whatever it is that I ask for if it's his will, and so I do believe that this is part of how we can trust a little bit more like Moses, is to understand that when you're standing there in these dire circumstances, it could be a health problem, it could be a marriage problem, it could be a child problem, it could be a business problem, it could be a money problem, it might be a moral temptation, whatever that is, is that if we, like Moses, will trust God, he will never give us less than as much as we need.

And then... Well, that's enough for today. How can we trust like Moses? We can allow God to change the worldview that we have. The Big Idea: **Like Moses, I will trust God so much that I never feel like I have to make something happen.** So how is it with you today? What is the dire circumstance that you're in, maybe somebody else is in, the situation where you feel like it's hopeless, it can't work out? And by the way, God bless you if you don't have that situation today, right? So for you, I hope you're thankful and grateful to God that he is taking care of you, but I'm going to say that from past experience that 90% of the men in the room, either themselves or someone close to them has some major problem in their life right now that, like me, like I said in the open, you just feel the weight of the fall, the weight of the fall.

So I'm going to ask that when you do your table discussions this morning, the first question is really to open up and be a little vulnerable about the thing that you are going through or the person you care about is going through, and at the end of these table discussions today, I hope that you will take the time to pray in earnest for each other that all of us would be able to really put our trust in God in the way that Moses did, to understand that we need to stand firm, that God will be our deliverer and all we really need to do is wait for him to reveal that next step.

And then when God does illuminate that next step, Daniel and I were talking about this earlier in the week in our meeting, we are walking in darkness most of the time. Kelly, you said this as well. We're walking in darkness, and then God takes a huge flood light and he shines it on the next place where we're supposed to step, so when he does that, take the step. Step into the place that he's illuminated for you. But sometimes he's going to prompt you to take a step where he has not yet even shown his light, but the character of God is, before your foot even hits the ground, even while your foot is still in the air, the spotlight is going to come on. He is going to show you what you need to do. He's not going to leave you alone. He's not going to abandon you. "Never will I leave you. Never will I forsake you. None of my sheep will be snatched out of my hands." Let us pray.

Our dearest Father, we come humbly to you this day, and for all who are feeling the weight of the fall, either in their own lives or in the lives of someone they really care about, Lord, I pray that you would help us to learn from Moses today, to be able to trust you so much that we really never feel like we have to make something happen, that you will in fact deliver us just as you delivered Moses and his people. And we ask this in Jesus name, amen.