

Living by Faith, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 7: Faith That Chooses God's People: Moses

Hebrews 11:23–28

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

This lesson carries some of the heaviest doctrinal freight in the entire study, because the passage forces the question of cost. Hebrews presents Moses not chiefly as a miracle worker but as a chooser, a man who weighed the treasures of Egypt against affliction with the people of God and deliberately took the harder path. The doctrinal stakes are these: faith is not merely intellectual belief or warm feeling, but a settled trust that reorders a person's entire scale of values. Moses 'considered' and 'chose,' words of deliberate evaluation. Be ready to show the class that biblical faith counts the cost (Luke 14:28) and still chooses God, because it sees an eternal reward more solid than anything the world can offer. The climactic doctrinal block, the Passover and the sprinkled blood, must be tied explicitly to Christ. The blood on the doorpost that turned away the destroyer is a deliberate signpost pointing to Jesus, our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7), whose blood redeems us from death (1 Peter 1:18–19). Israel's deliverance was a physical rescue that pictures a far greater spiritual redemption accomplished at the cross.

The spiritual-formation aim of the lesson is to make disciples who can count the cost and still choose well. Most students will never face a literal palace, but every one of them is daily choosing between the fleeting pleasures of sin and the reproach of Christ, between blending in with the world and being counted with God's people. Aim to help them see that sin's pleasures are real but temporary, while the reward of faith is unseen but eternal. The transformation we are after is a faith that has grown up enough to refuse what is good for the sake of what is better, and to identify openly with the Lord's people even when it costs something.

Keep the tone one of wonder and warmth, not mere duty. The marvel of this passage is that a man gave up everything the world calls success and the writer of Hebrews counts it the wisest trade ever made. Help the class feel the weight of that trade and then turn their eyes to Christ, who also despised the shame and looked to the joy set before Him (Hebrews 12:2). The same Lord who formed a chooser's faith in Moses is forming it in them.

Question 1

Student Question: *Hebrews 11:23 says that by faith Moses' parents hid him three months 'because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.' What does it tell us about faith that it can overcome the fear of a powerful ruler's command, and how does this set the stage for the choices Moses himself will later make?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Begin by setting the scene from Exodus 1 and 2. Pharaoh had decreed that every Hebrew baby boy be thrown into the Nile. Against the full weight of imperial power and a death sentence, two ordinary parents, Amram and Jochebed, chose to hide their son. Hebrews names the reason in a single word: faith. They feared God more than they feared the king, and that reordered fear is the seedbed of every later act in the chapter.

Draw out what this reveals about faith. Faith does not pretend the danger is not real; it weighs the danger against the greater reality of God and acts accordingly. The parents 'were not afraid of the king's edict' not because the edict was harmless but because they trusted a higher King. This is the same logic that will govern Moses' adult choices, and it is worth naming that pattern early.

Notice the providence woven through the story. The very basket meant to comply with Pharaoh's river decree becomes, in God's hands, the means of saving the child and placing him in Pharaoh's own household. Faith acts in obedience and trusts God with the outcomes it cannot control. The parents could not see how their three months of risk would unfold, but they did the next faithful thing.

Close by linking the generations. Moses' great refusals did not appear out of nowhere; they grew in soil his parents had prepared. The faith that defied the king's edict was, in a sense, handed down to the son. This prepares the class to think about the inheritance of faith and sets the stage for the costly choosing that follows.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Faith that fears God more than it fears human power and threat
- The reordered fear that makes courageous obedience possible
- God's providence working through ordinary acts of faithful risk
- Faith acting in obedience while trusting God with the outcome
- The handing down of faith from one generation to the next

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean that Moses' parents 'were not afraid of the king's edict'?
- How does fearing God rightly free us from being ruled by lesser fears?
- Where do you see God's providence working through their small act of faith?

Question 2

Student Question: *Moses' parents acted on faith long before Moses could choose anything for himself. Who first carried faith on your behalf, parents, grandparents, teachers, an older believer, and how has their courage shaped the person you are today?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-examining question turns the great theme of inherited faith toward gratitude. Just as Moses was carried by his parents' faith before he had any of his own, most believers can trace their faith to someone who prayed for them, taught them, or modeled trust in God before they understood it. Give the class room to remember specific people.

Help students name the specific courage they received. It may have been a mother who kept taking children to worship through hard years, a grandfather whose quiet integrity never wavered, or a teacher who took a young believer seriously. Naming the particular act or quality makes the gratitude concrete and the example imitable.

Gently raise the responsibility this creates. Faith is meant to be passed on. The same students who were carried by someone else's faith are now, whether they realize it or not, shaping the faith of others who watch them. Encourage them to see themselves as a link in a chain that began long before them and will continue after them.

Keep the tone warm and thankful. This is a moment to honor the faithful who have gone before and to let gratitude stir fresh commitment.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Faith received before it is personally chosen
- Gratitude for those who carried us in faith
- The specific courage and example of faithful forebears
- Every believer as a link who passes faith to the next generation
- Honoring the faithful who have gone before us

Discussion Prompts

- Who first carried faith on your behalf before you could choose it?
- What specific quality of their trust most shaped you?
- Whose faith might you be carrying right now?

Question 3

Student Question: *Verse 24 says that 'by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.' Why does Hebrews describe this as an act of faith rather than merely a political or personal decision, and what does it mean that faith is sometimes expressed in what we refuse?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Start by feeling the size of what Moses gave up. To be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter was to hold rank, wealth, education, and a future in the most powerful nation on earth. Refusing that title was not a small adjustment; it was the renunciation of an entire identity and

inheritance. Hebrews calls it faith because the renunciation was driven by trust in God and His people rather than by ambition, anger, or mere preference.

Press the point that faith often expresses itself in a refusal. We usually think of faith as stepping forward to do something, but here faith is most visible in a 'no.' Moses said no to a false identity in order to claim a true one. Faith that cannot say no to the world has not yet grown up. The same trust that makes us act for God also makes us decline what would pull us from Him.

Connect this to identity. Moses refused to let Egypt define who he was; he chose instead to be numbered among the people of God. For the believer, the deepest question of identity is settled the same way: not by status, success, or the labels the world offers, but by belonging to God and His people. Faith chooses its family.

Note the maturity in the phrase 'when he was grown up.' This was not the impulse of a child but the considered decision of an adult who had weighed his options. Faith's great refusals are usually deliberate, eyes-open choices, not careless reactions, and this prepares the class for the language of considering and choosing in the next verses.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Faith expressed in deliberate refusal, not only in action
- Renouncing a false identity to claim a true one in God's people
- Identity grounded in belonging to God rather than in status or success
- Faith that has matured enough to say no to the world
- The deliberate, considered nature of faith's great choices

Discussion Prompts

- Why does Hebrews call Moses' refusal an act of faith?
- How can saying no to something be a genuine expression of trust in God?
- Where does the world try to define your identity in ways faith must refuse?

Question 4

Student Question: *Moses had to grow up before he made his great refusal. Where in your own life do you sense God calling you to a more grown-up faith, a faith willing to refuse something good in order to hold on to something better?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question invites honest reflection on spiritual maturity. Hebrews stresses that Moses acted 'when he was grown up.' Childish faith wants God and everything else too; grown-up faith learns to let go of lesser goods for the sake of the greater. Help the class locate where their own faith is being called to mature in just this way.

Clarify that the choice is often not between good and evil but between good and best. Egypt offered Moses genuinely good things. The hardest choices in discipleship are frequently like this: a good job that crowds out the Lord's people, a good relationship that pulls a believer from obedience, a good comfort that quietly competes with God. Maturity is the willingness to release even a good thing for something better.

Encourage concreteness and resist guilt. The aim is not to manufacture shame but to invite one honest area where God is at work. Growth happens in particulars: a habit surrendered, an ambition reordered, a comfort held more loosely. Press the class toward a specific place rather than a vague resolution.

End with hope. Spiritual maturity is not achieved by gritting our teeth but by seeing something better, as Moses did. The more clearly we see Christ and the reward, the easier the letting go becomes.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The difference between childish and grown-up faith
- Choosing between the good and the best, not only good and evil
- Willingness to release even good things for something better
- Spiritual maturity as a process God is forming in us
- Letting go made possible by seeing something better

Discussion Prompts

- Where is God calling you toward a more grown-up faith right now?
- What good thing might you need to hold more loosely for the sake of something better?
- How does seeing the reward make the letting go easier?

Question 5

Student Question: *Verse 25 says Moses chose 'rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.' Notice that Scripture admits sin has real pleasures. Why is it important to be honest that sin is genuinely enjoyable for a season, and how does calling those pleasures 'fleeting' change the way we should weigh them?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Begin with the candor of Scripture. The Bible does not pretend that sin is never enjoyable. It frankly calls these 'the pleasures of sin,' acknowledging that temptation usually offers something that feels good. Pretending otherwise leaves believers unprepared and confused when sin actually does feel pleasant. Honesty here is a gift to the class.

Then fasten on the decisive word: fleeting. The pleasures are real, but they last only for a season and then they are gone, often leaving wreckage behind. The deception of sin is not that its

pleasures are fake but that they are presented as if they were lasting and worth the price. Faith refuses the lie by remembering how short the season is.

Set the two columns side by side, as Moses did. On one side, the fleeting pleasures of sin. On the other, mistreatment with the people of God. By every worldly measure the choice looks foolish, yet faith makes it because it weighs not only the pleasure but its duration, and not only the affliction but its companionship with God's people and its eternal reward. Faith does the long math.

Apply it to the everyday battle with temptation. The practical power of this verse is that it teaches us to ask of any tempting pleasure, how long will this last, and what will it cost? Teaching the class to weigh pleasures by their duration and consequences is one of the most useful tools the passage gives.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The biblical honesty that sin offers real, if temporary, pleasure
- The deception of sin presenting fleeting pleasures as lasting
- Weighing pleasures by their duration and their cost
- Affliction with God's people set against momentary enjoyment
- Faith doing the long math rather than grabbing the immediate

Discussion Prompts

- Why is it important to admit honestly that sin can feel good?
- How does the word 'fleeting' change the way you weigh a tempting pleasure?
- What does it look like to 'do the long math' when you are tempted?

Question 6

Student Question: *Be honest about the pull of 'fleeting pleasures' in your own life. What is one passing pleasure you are tempted to reach for that quietly competes with your commitment to God's people and God's ways?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is a vulnerable question, so model openness and create safety. Most fleeting pleasures that pull at believers are not scandalous; they are ordinary comforts and indulgences that quietly take the place God should hold: entertainment that crowds out worship, spending that competes with generosity, a private habit, the approval of people who do not honor God. Help the class name the real and often subtle pulls.

Help students see the competition clearly. The danger is rarely a single dramatic choice; it is the slow drift in which a passing pleasure gradually outranks our commitment to the Lord and His

people. Naming the specific pleasure, and what it competes with, is the first step toward reordering it.

Point toward the remedy, which is not white-knuckled willpower but a better vision. Moses did not merely resist Egypt; he saw the reward. The way to loosen the grip of a fleeting pleasure is to fill the heart with something better and more lasting. Encourage practices that keep the eternal reward in view.

Keep the tone hopeful and personal. The goal is one honest area, surrendered in trust, not a catalog of failures.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The subtle, everyday pull of passing pleasures
- The slow drift in which comfort outranks commitment
- Naming what a particular pleasure competes with
- Reordering desire by a better and more lasting vision
- Honesty about temptation as a doorway to growth

Discussion Prompts

- What passing pleasure quietly competes with your commitment to God?
- What does that pleasure tend to crowd out in your life?
- What better thing could you fill that space with instead?

Question 7

Student Question: *Verse 27 says Moses 'left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.' How does fixing our eyes on the unseen God give us the courage to do hard and costly things, and how does this connect to living by faith rather than by sight?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Center the class on the remarkable phrase, 'he endured as seeing him who is invisible.' Moses faced the very real anger of a very real king, yet he was steadied by an even greater reality he could not see: God Himself. Faith does not deny the visible threat; it sees a greater unseen presence alongside it and is held steady. This is the secret of his courage.

Draw out the connection to walking by faith rather than sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). The whole of Hebrews 11 trains us to treat the unseen God and His promises as more solid than the visible pressures that frighten us. Moses could leave Egypt and face Pharaoh's wrath because, to the eye of faith, God was the most real thing in the room.

Apply it to the believer's fears. We are not usually afraid of kings, but we are afraid of disapproval, loss, failure, and the unknown. Courage to do hard and costly things comes not

from feeling brave but from keeping the unseen God before our eyes, larger than the thing we fear. We endure as seeing Him.

Offer practical help. The eyes of faith are strengthened by Scripture, prayer, the Lord's Supper, remembering God's past faithfulness, and the encouragement of the church. Courage is the fruit of a settled vision of God, and that vision is something we can cultivate.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Enduring by keeping the unseen God before our eyes
- Faith seeing a greater reality alongside the visible threat
- Walking by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)
- Courage as the fruit of a settled vision of God, not mere bravery
- Practices that strengthen the eyes of faith

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean to endure 'as seeing him who is invisible'?
- How does keeping God before your eyes shrink the things you fear?
- What practice helps you keep the unseen God clearly in view?

Question 8

Student Question: *Moses 'endured as seeing him who is invisible.' What helps you keep the reality of God before your eyes when fear, pressure, or discouragement makes Him feel far away?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-examining question moves the truth of verse 27 into practice. Every believer knows seasons when God feels distant and the visible troubles feel overwhelming. The question is not how to manufacture a feeling but how to keep the reality of God in view when feelings fail. Invite honesty about those harder seasons.

Help the class identify what actually works for them. For many it is daily time in Scripture, where God speaks; for others it is prayer, the gathered worship of the church, the Lord's Supper, journaling God's past faithfulness, or the company of a believing friend. The point is that keeping God in view is not automatic; it is cultivated through deliberate habits.

Distinguish feeling from reality, which is pastorally important. God's nearness does not depend on our awareness of it. Moses endured not because he always felt God but because he kept treating God as real. Encourage students that faith can hold firm even when the feelings are thin.

End with encouragement. The habits that keep God before our eyes are within reach of every believer, and they grow stronger with use.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Keeping God real when He feels distant
- The difference between God's nearness and our awareness of it
- Deliberate habits that cultivate the eyes of faith
- Faith holding firm when feelings are thin
- The encouragement of the church in hard seasons

Discussion Prompts

- What helps you keep the reality of God in view when He feels far away?
- How do you tell the difference between God's nearness and your feeling of it?
- Which habit most strengthens your sense of God's presence?

Question 9

Student Question: *Verse 26 says Moses 'considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward,' and verse 28 says that 'by faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.' Why does the writer of Hebrews say Moses suffered for the sake of Christ centuries before Christ came, and what does it mean to treat the reproach of Christ as greater wealth than the world's treasures? How does the Passover lamb and its blood on the doorposts point forward to Jesus, 'our Passover lamb' who has been sacrificed (1 Corinthians 5:7), and to the redemption we have through His blood?*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the doctrinal summit of the lesson, so give it the most room and the most care. Begin with the startling phrase, 'the reproach of Christ.' Moses lived roughly fourteen centuries before Bethlehem, yet Hebrews says his suffering was for the sake of Christ. The point is that God's saving purpose has always centered on Christ. To suffer with and for the people of God, the people through whom the Messiah would come, was already to share in the reproach that belongs to Christ and His cause. The whole story of redemption was moving toward Jesus, and Moses cast his lot with that story.

Unfold the great trade. Moses 'considered,' he made a deliberate calculation, and judged the reproach of Christ to be greater wealth than all the treasures of Egypt. By every visible measure this is absurd; reproach is not wealth and Egypt's treasures were immense. But faith weighs differently because faith was 'looking to the reward.' Moses kept the eternal reward in view, and against that horizon the richest treasures of the greatest empire looked small. To treat the reproach of Christ as greater wealth is to count even the shame of belonging to Him as more valuable than anything the world can offer.

Now move to the Passover, and let the wonder of it land. On the night God struck down the firstborn of Egypt, every Israelite household was told to kill a lamb and put its blood on the

doorposts. Where the blood was applied, the destroyer passed over and the firstborn lived. Salvation came not by Israel's worth but by the blood of a lamb, applied in faith. Moses kept this by faith, trusting that the blood would do what God said. Make sure the class feels the gravity: the difference between life and death that night was blood on a door.

Then draw the line straight to Christ, for this is the heart of the matter. Paul writes plainly, 'Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed' (1 Corinthians 5:7). The Passover was a divinely designed preview of the cross. Jesus is the Lamb without blemish whose blood was poured out, and Peter says we were redeemed not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18–19). As the blood on the doorpost turned away the destroyer from Israel, so the blood of Jesus delivers us from sin and death. The physical rescue of Israel pictures the far greater spiritual redemption accomplished at Calvary.

Bring it home to how we come under that blood, for faith here is not passive. Israel was not spared by merely believing the lamb had died; they had to apply the blood as God commanded. In the same way, the New Testament teaches that we come into Christ and under the cleansing of His blood by an obedient faith: hearing the gospel, believing that Jesus is Lord and Christ, repenting of sin, confessing Him, and being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins, where we are united with His death (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3–4; Galatians 3:26–27), and then living faithfully thereafter. The blood that delivers us is real, and God has told us how to come under it.

Close with worship. The same faith that made Moses choose reproach over treasure is the faith that clings to the Lamb whose blood saves us. Let the class marvel that the gospel was being written in blood on Egyptian doors long before it was written in blood at Calvary, and that the reward Moses looked toward is the inheritance we share in Christ.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The reproach of Christ as the suffering of belonging to God's redemptive purpose, centered on Christ from the beginning
- Faith as a deliberate calculation that counts reproach with Christ as greater wealth than the world's treasures
- The eternal reward kept in view, reordering the value of all earthly things
- The Passover lamb and the blood on the doorposts as a divinely designed preview of the cross
- Christ our Passover lamb sacrificed for us (1 Corinthians 5:7)
- Redemption not by silver or gold but by the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18–19)
- Coming under the blood of Christ through an obedient faith: believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3–4; Galatians 3:26–27)

Discussion Prompts

- Why does Hebrews speak of Moses bearing 'the reproach of Christ' so long before Christ came?
- What does it mean to treat the reproach of Christ as greater wealth than the world's treasures?
- How does the Passover blood on the doorposts help us understand the blood of Christ and how we come under it?

Question 10

Student Question: *Looking back over Hebrews 11:23–28 as a whole, where is God asking you to make a costly choice to be counted with His people and to value the eternal reward over passing comfort? Name one concrete way Jesus is forming this kind of choosing faith in you right now.*

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This capstone question gathers the whole passage and turns it toward transformation. Moses' faith was a chooser: it refused a false identity, declined fleeting pleasures, endured by seeing the invisible God, counted reproach as wealth, and trusted the blood of the lamb. Ask each student to bring that pattern down to one concrete choice God is setting before them now.

Press for specifics over generalities. A costly choice to be counted with God's people might mean speaking openly about faith where it is unwelcome, prioritizing the assembly and the fellowship of the church over competing comforts, obeying the gospel if a person has never done so, or releasing a passing pleasure that competes with the Lord. The aim is one real step, not a warmer feeling.

Lift the class's eyes to Christ, the goal of the whole study. Jesus Himself made the ultimate choosing-faith decision: for the joy set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame (Hebrews 12:2). The choosing faith we admire in Moses is most perfectly seen in our Lord, and He is forming it in us as we follow Him.

Close in prayer over the specific choices named, asking God to give the class eyes that see the reward and hearts willing to be counted with His people.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Personal application of choosing faith to one concrete decision
- Being counted with God's people even at a cost
- Valuing the eternal reward over passing comfort
- Christ as the supreme example of choosing faith (Hebrews 12:2)
- Spiritual formation into the likeness of Christ as the aim of the study
- The role of prayer in taking a costly step of faith

Discussion Prompts

- Where is God asking you to make a costly choice to be counted with His people?
- What is one concrete step, not just a feeling, that you can take this week?
- How can this class pray for and encourage you in that choice?