

Series: Exodus

Title: Salvation by Christ's Faith and Works

Text: Exodus 6: 9-29

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The LORD sent Moses to the children of Israel with the gospel—**Exodus 6: 9: And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.**

Will-workers like to speak about their seeking, how they exercised their will, how they made their decision to accept their poor, pitiful Jesus into their lives. In other words, they boast of their faithfulness. The children of Israel went through something far different. God's true saints go through something far different. "*they hearkened not unto Moses because of anguish of spirit, and because of cruel bondage.*"

Exodus 6: 10: And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 11: Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. 12: And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips?

Will-working preachers and will-works religionists like to boast in their works: in their ability to witness, to serve, to make converts and plant churches. That was not Moses' experience nor the experience of God's true ministers, true servants, true witnesses. Moses found himself unable to do the work God called him to, unable to bear witness of Christ.

Then after Israel showed their unfaithfulness and after Moses turned from his work, God does two things which shows how his people are saved. We will look at those a little later in the message.

Proposition: It is by the faith and works of Christ that sinners like us are saved by God.

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NOT OUR FAITH

Exodus 6: 9: And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

It is not our faith that saves us. I am well aware that on multiple occasions, Christ said to sinners, "*thy faith hath saved thee.*" But they knew, like all true believers know, that it was the object of their faith—Christ Jesus—that saved them by his faithfulness. Without question faith is of utmost importance:

Hebrews 11: 6: without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

The very purpose for which I preach the gospel to you now is that God might give you faith to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But if you do, it will be by Christ's faith and works and you will know it and confess it.

But at this point in Exodus, the children of Israel represent believers. Back in chapter 4, they heard the gospel which Moses and Aaron delivered:

Exodus 4: 31: And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

But after they told Pharaoh God's word and Pharaoh did nothing but make their lives even more bitter, now they hear Moses preach the gospel, and *they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.*

When God puts a new spirit in his people, God makes us honest about ourselves. Every true believer—each of believer here—will confess that there are times we do not have faith to even hear the word of our Lord. We know it is not our faithfulness but Christ's faith that saves us.

Moses declared God's name—*Jehovah, God Almighty*—able to save. By his name he makes his promises sure because God will not pollute his name. God will magnify his name in the hearts of his people—for his names' sake he will not lose one of his elect! But while the words were going forth the only thing the children of Israel could think about was where they could find straw needed to make the tale of bricks Pharaoh required. Have you ever sit here unable to hear God's gospel because you were anxious about what you have to do tomorrow?

Moses declared God's covenant promise. God saved his elect Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by God's everlasting covenant, which Christ made sure as their Surety! God saves all his elect in every age the same way—by everlasting, unbreakable covenant promise—all the promises of God are yes and amen in Christ by his precious blood who justified his people from our sins! But as the word of God's covenant went forth, the only promise they could think about was their promise to the taskmasters, that tomorrow they would deliver Pharaoh his tale of bricks. Has your spirit ever been in such anguish?

Moses preached the works of God who fulfills all his promises himself in Christ. It is God's work that brings us out from under the burden of the law of sin and death, that snatches us from the devil's chains. Christ's work of judgment on the cross redeemed his people from the curse of the law, crucifying our old man of sin with him! It is God the Holy Spirit's work to take us to himself and be a God to us, effectually making us know him! By God's work he preserves his people into the land he promised us for an inheritance. But each time they heard the word "work", Israel could only think about the bitterness of the whip of the taskmasters

Every believer finds ourselves right where Israel was from time to time? Our old sin-nature, the cares of this world, , the devil and wicked men—cause us anguish of spirit, making it impossible for us to hear God's word and believe. Spurgeon said, "What a poor reason for refusing light because the night is so dark!"

When God first drew me to Christ and gave me faith to rest in him, I thought after that I would not be the sinner I used to be. But after more than 30 years in the faith, my sinful flesh has not gotten any better, only worse. Often, my sin-nature takes me into captivity so that I cannot hearken unto Christ because of anguish of spirit, and the cruel bondage of my sin-nature. But brethren we are not alone...

Romans 7: 20: Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21: I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22: For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

That is why God left us in this body of death in this Egypt. It is to teach us not to trust ourselves or our faith but to trust the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ who alone delivered us on the cross, who alone delivers us every hour and who alone shall at last deliver us into heavens glory.

NOT OUR WORKS

Exodus 6: 10: And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 11: Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. 12: And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips?

Not only is it not our faith that saves us, it is not our works that saves us. Again, let no one misunderstand me. Scripture declares *faith without works is dead*. All who God gives faith shall perform good works because God ordained we shall according to Ephesians 2.

But our works are often non-existent. They cannot save. We see this in Moses who turns from his work in unbelief. Moses was faithful to God. He declared to the children of Israel every word God sent him to preach. *But they hearkened not unto Moses*.

God's true preacher finds that he is altogether powerless to make any sinner believe the gospel, not even power to make himself believe. Still, God's charge to Moses had not changed but Moses had. Moses had fallen so far in unbelief that he is back using his first objection—his speech impediment--*uncircumcised lips*.

Brethren, how often does a little rejection cause us to cease from the work to God has called us to? So we see why no believer could ever look to our pitiful faith or feeble works to gain God's favor or for salvation. The apostle Paul said,

2 Corinthians 3: 5: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God...

CHRIST'S FAITH AND WORKS

We are saved by Christ's faith and Christ's works.

First, Christ's faithfulness is declared in the list of names he gave to Moses. This is his answer to the children of Israel who had not faith to hearken to the gospel Moses preached.

Exodus 6: 13: And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. 14: These *be* the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel [then he lists his sons whom he would deliver out of Egypt] 15: And the sons of Simeon; [then he lists his sons whom he would deliver out of Egypt] 16: And these are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations; [then he lists his sons whom he would deliver, including Moses and Aaron], 26: These are that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies. 27: These are they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these are that Moses and Aaron.

When I first read those names, my first thought was the Lamb's book of life in which God wrote the names of those he chose in Christ and blessed with all spiritual blessings before the world was made.

Revelation 21:27: And there shall in no wise enter into [heavenly Jerusalem] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Christ entered covenant becoming Surety for each of God's elect whose names are written in that book, so that he became the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God has never and will never look to anyone but Christ his Son, his Faith and his Works!

Then something else caught my attention. Only the names of the first three sons of Jacob are given. Why? Those were the most unfaithful of all the sons of Jacob. Jacob pronounced a curse on those three due to their unfaithfulness and sinful works. Now, in our text, their children are unfaithful and turning from the works God called them to. Brethren, every elect child written in God's book of life in eternity came under the curse in Adam. Every sinner God saves is the most unfaithful of all—the chief of sinners!

Yet, here we see Christ's faithfulness. He promised Abraham he would redeem his children and in perfect faithfulness he still declares he will do so. Our unbelief, our lack of service, our sin and our murmuring does not change the faithfulness of God in Christ toward his people. Christ is faithful so he fulfills his everlasting covenant promise to save and keep those God chose by his free and sovereign grace from eternity. The faith of Christ even takes unfaithful sinful workers like us and makes us priests unto God like he did Levi's sons. We are saved by Christ's faithfulness.

Then using Moses, God declares we are saved by Christ's works. This is Christ's answer to Moses turning from the work of preaching that Christ charged him with.

Exodus 6: 28: And it came to pass on the day when the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt, [God did this in addition to giving the list of names. It was on the same occasion] **29: That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I am the LORD: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee. 30: And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?** [after Moses said that, God said this] **7: 1: And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. 2: Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.**

Christ came to Moses and spoke strength into Moses. Moses is God's preacher. He represents all God's preachers. And in that he was called to a work, he represents all servants of Christ. Aaron typifies Christ

Christ in faithfulness came to Moses. Christ strengthened him by reminding him that *he had made Moses a god unto Pharaoh*. It means Christ made Moses to be Christ's ambassador unto Pharaoh. It means Christ sent Moses with divine authority unto Pharaoh. For that reason, Christ assured Moses his labor would not be in vain (Jeremiah 1:10; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 2 Corinthians 2:14-17). This is what Christ does for every man Christ sends as his ambassador. Christ is our Strength. And Christ is the strength of all his witnesses, his servants. He is our only Strength!

2 Corinthians 12:9: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

But once Christ gives us his word to preach, we have no sufficiency to make the word effectual. So the Lord said to Moses, "*Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: [unto Aaron] and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.*" Christ faithfully strengthens his preacher and gives his preacher his word to preach. Then we give the word back to our Elder Brother, Christ Jesus, asking Christ our Prophet to speak the word effectually into the heart of his people. This is what all his witnesses do because we have no power in us to make the gospel effectual. So Christ through the Holy Spirit gets all the glory for making his people hear and believe on him.

Brethren, our faith toward God does not save us. Our faith is non-existent at times. It is the object of our faith, Christ Jesus the Faithful! Our works do not save us. Our works are non-existent at times. It is Christ that saves by his works.

Robert Hawker said, "We can never trust ourselves too little, nor our GOD too much. I can do nothing by myself, but I can do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth me."

Amen!