

**2022 Theme - Extraordinary God + Ordinary People = Transformed Lives**  
**Sermon Series - Transformed Leadership (Moses)**  
**Sermon Title - Transformed Leadership by Rejecting the Pleasures of Sin**  
**Sermon Text - Hebrews 11:23-24**  
**Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry**

### **Full Sermon Notes**

“Nothing comes close to the Lord Almighty, Nothing as sweet as Your love and mercy”  
How true those lyrics are, and yet sometimes we still are enticed by the sins and things of this world! If we could only truly understand that nothing comes close to the Lord Almighty, and nothing is as sweet as His love and mercy! Let’s pray and ask God to inscribe those truths upon our hearts and minds today! Let’s pray!

Last week we saw that Moses faced a huge choice in his life! Where would he find his identity? Would he find his identity as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter and follow their pagan ways of worshiping the Pharaoh as a god, or would he choose to be known as a Hebrew and follow the God of the Hebrew people? This decision would mean walking away from power, prestige, position, and possessions! He would be finding his identity in the God of the Hebrew people, who were at the time enslaved by the Egyptians. Talk about a step of faith! But that’s exactly what Moses did and it opened the door for him to become one of the greatest leaders in both Hebrew and world history! And we saw how the principles apply to our lives in the fact that we too have to make a decision whether or not we will find our identity in God or in the things of this world. Identity in this world is short lived, tenuous, and has to be constantly earned and fought for. However, accepting that you are known by God, refusing to be known by anything else, and getting to know God personally allows you to find a lasting identity! An identity that is comforting, encouraging, powerful, eternal and transforming to the way we lead with our lives! You see, when you realize you are not only known by God, but loved by God, you want to live for Him and do good and live righteously! Not to earn His love but because of His love! This takes us to another choice that Moses was making when he chose to walk away from his life of privilege, prestige, power, and possessions. Moses was choosing to walk away from a life of sinful pleasure and taking the huge risk of facing a life of suffering alongside his own people. But there are powerful reasons he made this additional, transforming choice! We will find these reasons as we examine our text in Hebrews 11:24-25...

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.

Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

The reasons that God called Moses to walk away from sin and to follow God’s plans for his life are many. But there are three big reasons and they also apply to our lives in a significant way! The first is this...

### **1. The Pleasure of Sin is a Terrible Purpose for Life**

Our text says...

Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Moses chose the higher purpose of following God's plan for his life and helping the enslaved Hebrew people and we're going to talk about that higher purpose in just a moment, but first you must understand this: When your purpose in life is the pleasure of sin, you'll eventually discover that...

*Worldly pleasure is never satisfied so you'll never achieve your purpose*

God's Word says...

Proverbs 27:20 Death and Destruction are never satisfied, and neither are human eyes.

Worldly pleasure always wants more and then begins to demand more! It causes a person to become self-absorbed, self-centered, self-pleasing, self-indulgent, self-seeking, self-obsessed, self-consuming, self-serving, and we have a word for all of these - Selfish! And when a person has these things in full swing, they eventually become self-loathing, and self-destructive, because real purpose in life cannot be found in sinful pleasures!

The writer of Proverbs says this...

Proverbs 21:17 Whoever loves pleasure will become poor...

Why? Because the god of pleasure is never satisfied no matter how much you spend on it! You see it all the time. People who seek to find their purpose and their happiness in the pleasures that money can buy may have millions and even billions but want more! So they may have worldly wealth but they are broke when it comes to real meaning in life and they find their relationships strained or broken, because they have spent their resources on themselves. So they are poor in many ways. You see...

*Worldly pleasure is deceptive so you'll end up disappointed*

People who seek purpose in pleasure are led to believe that if they could have just a little more, the newest, the biggest, the bestest, they would then be happy! It's like chasing a mirage in the desert. You get there and it's not there! Somebody's moved the finish line. Same thing with finding pleasure in fame and popularity. No matter how much you have you always seem to want more! How many gold records would it take to make a musician happy? How many Oscars for an actor? How many Super Bowl rings, Stanley cups, first place ribbons or trophies for an athlete? Nothing wrong with awards and achievements, but seeking to find your purpose in these things is very wrong and could be called idolatry! When pleasure is our purpose we make ourselves into little gods and ironically these little gods worship idols.

*Worldly pleasure destroys your ability to lead others well*

Why is this? It should be obvious. When we are all about me, myself and I, we can't lead others well because we don't care about others, our witness to them or the example we set for them. A person who is seeking to find their purpose in pleasure takes on some pretty awful character traits. Paul warned his young apprentice Timothy with these words...

2 Timothy 3:1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

2 Timothy 3:2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

2 Timothy 3:3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,

2 Timothy 3:4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—

2 Timothy 3:5 having a form of godliness but denying its power...

So we see clearly that pleasure is not a good purpose, but we find in our text another reason to make the choice Moses made...

## **2. The Will and Plan of God is a Great Purpose for Life!**

Our text says...

Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Once again, Moses made a choice. He chose God's will and plan for his life even though he didn't fully understand it at the time. He chose, by faith, to trust God with his choice and with whatever might come his way as a result! Moses had seen the mistreatment of the Hebrew people and it troubled him greatly. He took immediate action but quickly discovered that his own efforts were not going to be good enough to accomplish the plan of God. Moses fled to Midian after killing an Egyptian who had been beating a Hebrew and it was in Midian that God would grow him and develop him into the man of God he would need to become in order to lead God's people. A lot happened in Midian and Moses would be there 40 years before God would lead him to go back to Egypt to begin enacting His plan. Several questions for you and me emerge from this: Are we willing to walk away from the pleasures of sin and follow God's purpose for our lives? Are we willing to trust God and learn from Him when we find ourselves in an unexpected place? Are we willing to wait on God's plan no matter how long it takes? Listen to what Paul told Titus concerning God's plan for His people...

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.

Titus 2:12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

Titus 2:13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Titus 2:14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Titus 2:15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

This should be our purpose in life: To live for the One who died for us! To shun evil and walk away from the pleasures of sin and trust God's plans for our lives! Paul says this is what we should teach. He says we are to encourage and rebuke with all authority! Folks, this is how transformed leadership takes place. Like Moses, when we are walking away from the pleasures of sin and seeking to find God's will and plan for our lives, we have the credibility and the authority to be leaders.

The writer of Proverbs gives us great practical wisdom for doing this...

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

Proverbs 3:6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.

And while this was written long after Moses' time, this is exactly what Moses did. And as we will see in the coming weeks, God was able to transform Moses into an amazing leader who would with God's power, wisdom and strength, lead the people out of their bondage in Egypt! So one of the biggest reasons to walk away from the pleasure of sin is because it is a terrible purpose for life. But another reason is this...

### **3. The Pleasure of Sin is Fleeting**

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

God is honest and His Word is honest and truthful! God's Word never says that sin is not fun or pleasant, it is, but only for a moment! It quickly passes! It doesn't last! That's another reason it is so destructive. It has to be repeated over and over and over again. Ever wonder why sin is so addictive? It's because sin's pleasure and joy are momentary and fleeting. It's like constantly consuming sugar for energy. And we all know that's not good for you and at some point you need a good hearty meal that can give you longer lasting energy, and more healthy energy. I don't know enough about the science of diet to get into all of that, but I can tell you this: If I eat a hearty breakfast with eggs, bacon, grits, and toast, I can get some good work done before lunch. On the other hand, if I only have a sweet snack, I find myself dragging by around 10:00am. My grandad spent much of his life working as a foreman in the brake shop for the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad in McComb, MS. When he was 90 years old and still eating his

bacon and eggs for breakfast he would tell me, “Son, when I was a foreman for the railroad, if a man came to work and he didn’t have any hog grease on his lips, I’d send him home, he weren’t no count, he hadn’t had any breakfast!” My apologies to my vegetarian brothers and sisters, but the point is this: sin’s pleasure doesn’t last! People try to make it last through repetition, but it doesn’t work. You’ve all heard the definition of insanity? Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results! The Egyptians were a pleasure seeking culture and the tombs they built for their Pharaohs indicated they thought they could take their worldly possessions with them and enjoy them in the afterlife! They were determined to find happiness in the pleasures of this world! How sad. And we all know, they couldn’t take it with them because those things are still entombed with them in the pyramids unless graver robbers or government sponsored archaeological digs were done and the artifacts are in museums. But their worldly possessions did them no good in the afterlife! God’s Word is clear on the fleeting pleasures of sin...

1 John 2:16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

1 John 2:17 The world and its desires pass away...

Did you notice the dot, dot, dot on that last verse? That means there’s more! So let me read those two verses again with what’s after the dot, dot, dot!

1 John 2:16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

1 John 2:17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

Our leadership, our witness, and our testimony is transformed when we understand that last verse...

1 John 2:17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

Why is this?

#### **4. The Love of The Lord Endures Forever**

The will of God is for us to find our identity in a personal relationship with Him and this truth is found in John 3:16...

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

So if a person accepts Jesus as their Savior and finds their purpose in God’s will and plan for their life, they can testify along with the Psalmist the following truths. And I want you to help me out with the reading of this passage. This will be like a responsive reading some of you may

have grown up with. I'll read the first part of each verse and I would ask you to read the tag line! It will be on the screen and your part will be in all caps!

Psalm 136:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods. HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords: HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:4 to him who alone does great wonders, HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:5 who by his understanding made the heavens, HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:6 who spread out the earth upon the waters, HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER..  
Psalm 136:7 who made the great lights— HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:8 the sun to govern the day, HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:9 the moon and stars to govern the night; HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:10 to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:11 and brought Israel out from among them HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:12 with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:13 to him who divided the Red Sea asunder HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:14 and brought Israel through the midst of it, HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.  
Psalm 136:15 but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea; HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.

Transformed Leadership happens in our lives when we accept the truth and live the truth that His Love Endures Forever! Amen? Amen! Now there's another reason to choose to walk away from the fleeting pleasures of sin and it's a very practical reason.

## **5. The Pleasure of Sin Comes at a Great Price**

Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Here's something else Moses and Jesus had in common. They were both tempted by the pleasures of sin and both walked away. They understood the devastating cost of giving in to temptation! It's not that Moses was perfect like Jesus, we know that Moses was not perfect and did sin, but in this moment in time, when confronted with the pleasures of this world, which he could have fully embraced as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he chose instead to say no and to choose the mission God had for him. Jesus did that in the desert when tempted by Satan. One of the biggest reasons that the pleasures of sin are fleeting is because of the consequences of sin. One of my favorite preachers from the last century was a man by the name of R.G. Lee. He pastored First Baptist in New Orleans for a short time but became the pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tn from 1927-1960. One of his most famous messages was called "Payday Someday!" I have a book written by him from the 1930's called The Whirlwinds of God. It was one of the few books in my library that survived Katrina. He describes the price of sin in such a powerful and convicting way so I wanted to share with you some of his words.

“Sin’s road may seem to be soft and smooth, but sin’s road grows rough toward the end, and ends in black night. Sin plants its flowers and underneath each one of them a tarantula. Sin spreads its silken and downy couch of indulgence which outwardly appears beautiful, but at the same time sin puts a nest of brooding serpents underneath that silken couch. Sin opens sparkling pleasure fountains, but every one who drinketh thereat and therefrom drinks water which is bitterer by far than the bitter waters of Marah. Sin, with opaline lights, lures us out to sea, and then, in the horror of the night, strangles our cry in the deep. Sin promises us substance and store if we will but walk its deceptive streets, and then, having pierced our feet with thorns, it leaves us to stumble on to the dungeons of hell.

The stag pursued by hungry hounds with open mouths is not more miserable than the man who is pursued by his sins. The bird taken in the fowler’s net and laboring vainly to escape is less wretched than the woman who, yielding to sin’s enticement, has woven about herself a web of deception. An eagle, once used to the sunlight heights, but now beating his wings out against the brass bars of his cage, is less unhappy than the man who has a skeleton in his house of life. A swimmer in storm-stirred sea, harassed by the sight of a shark’s fin and jaws nearby, is not more tormented than the man who goes on to meet the retributive hour of his sinning.”

Whirlwinds of God, 1932, pg 22. The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

If more of us truly grasped the truth of those words, then the pleasures of sin would not be so enticing! But here’s a hard truth: People don’t want to hear what I just read. In fact, one of my favorite theologians, Peter Kreeft, who is 85 years old, and was a philosophy professor at Boston College, challenges us with these words...

“Doctors are not called uncompassionate if they give their patients a diagnosis of cancer or a prescription for an operation. Yet doctors of the soul are called uncompassionate if they give a diagnosis of sin and prescription of repentance. Yet the two cases are exactly parallel. The only difference is that sin is the cancer of the soul, not of the body. Our society no longer believes in or cares about the soul. Would you want your doctor to be as compassionate to the disease as he is to the patient? Would you want him or her to be compassionate to your cancer cells? Of course not. But we want our moral teachers to be ‘compassionate’ rather than “judgemental” about the spiritual cancers, the sins and evils that we are addicted to, especially the two that dominate modern life, lust and greed.” Peter Kreeft, Making Choices Pg 21. 1990

Our ability to lead is devastated when we are dominated by the pleasures of sin! It’s one of the tragic costs of allowing ourselves to settle for so much less than what God intended for our lives. God’s Word says...

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

And then again, in Romans 6:23...

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death...

But there's hope and good news when we read the rest of Romans 6:23 and this takes us to our last reason for walking away from the fleeting pleasures of sin like Moses.

## **6. Rejecting the Fleeting Pleasures of Sin Brings Great Reward**

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When we turn from our sins and turn to Jesus our eternity is changed! How does this happen? Paul tells us in Romans 10:9-13...

Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Romans 10:11 As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame."

Romans 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

Romans 10:13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

What a gift! What a blessing! Eternal life in glory with the Lord! But what about our lives here on earth? Well there's great reward in this life as well when we walk away from the fleeting pleasures of sin. While this world has its share of trouble, when we turn away from sin we begin experiencing the freedom that comes from the Lord and living according to His principles, His will, His ways! And there are amazing benefits to living for God! Now, I've got to tell you something I don't think the church does a good job communicating to people. Paul said this...

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Galatians 6:8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

When you come to God He forgives and cleanses you of the penalty of sin for eternity, but there may still be some hard consequences to deal with in this life. There may be a bad harvest coming because you've sown some bad seed in the ground! Don't get discouraged, we will reap a harvest of righteousness at the proper time if we don't give up! Sometimes we get impatient! But God will help you get through the bad harvest, just don't faint, give up and go back to the old ways! If you do, you'll just put more bad seeds in the ground and prolong the bad harvest! Sometimes people come to Jesus and get saved when they're facing grim consequences because of their sin. That's okay, come to Jesus where you are and just as you are. He loves you and will help you. But sometimes people get excited about being forgiven yet don't

understand that they may still face repercussions of wrong they've done. God is working in all of your circumstances. Trust Him! As I said, God will help you through those things. You are forgiven. Hang in there. If you mess up you know He will forgive you but you should get to a place where you are grieved when you sin because you know how much it hurts God and the cost Jesus had to pay to forgive that sin, so you should seek His strength and power to live victoriously for His glory and honor!! You're saved by grace and you stay saved by grace! But when you are saved by grace and don't grow in grace then you may be tempted to go back to the old ways. If you do, you don't lose your relationship with God, but you do lose your fellowship with Him! You don't lose your salvation but you do lose the victory, the peace, the purpose, and the joy of your Salvation! And you lose the ability to lead others with your life. That's tragic. If you allow yourself to be drawn back into the fleeting pleasures of sin you will reap what you sow in this life even though your soul is saved for eternity because of Jesus' sacrifice and your acceptance of that. But folks we don't have to settle for a life of defeat and living in sin. None of us will be perfect on this side of heaven, but we don't have to live in bondage to sin. Paul said...

Romans 7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?

Romans 7:25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,  
Romans 8:2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh,

Romans 8:4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Moses, the one God used to give us the Ten Commandments, chose to walk away from the fleeting pleasures of sin, and his life and leadership was transformed. Jesus walked away from the temptations of Satan in the desert and chose to follow The Father's plan of the Cross which is why we have the opportunity to be forgiven the penalty of our sins and we have the ability to overcome the power of sin. But we have a choice: to live according to the flesh or according to the Spirit! An old hymn tells us what to do if we are struggling...

O soul are you weary and troubled, No light in the darkness you see  
There's light for a look at the Savior, And life more abundant and free  
Turn your eyes upon Jesus and the things of earth  
will grow strangely dim in the light of His Glory and grace  
Helen H. Lemmel

Let's pray!!