

## Hebrews 11:24-26

<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. <sup>25</sup> He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. <sup>26</sup> He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

-----

### "CHRIST" IS NOT A CURSE WORD

It's a word that moms and dads around the world forbid their children from using. A word that causes kids to snicker and adults to sneer. Some say the word flippantly, others jokingly. It is a word that is considered offensive and inappropriate in public speech. People across the globe call this word disgraceful, shameful. It's a word that might even cause you to blush at times. I am going to be so bold as to speak that word, *that shameful word*, right here in your presence: that word is "Christ."

Isn't it true that we often treat that Name like a dirty word? A word we should never say in public? We're afraid that we might be subjected to the shame and ridicule of the people around us. When we get together here in this building, we're all content to confess our Christian faith. But how about when we go out into the world? It's a lot harder to pronounce that Name in public, isn't it? Moses publicly professed his faith in Christ at the cost of his fame, fortune and friends. Not only was Christ a word that filled his thoughts, it was a word that was frequently on his lips and colored everything that he did. Let's learn what gave Moses the conviction that

#### "Christ" Is Not a Curse Word

I. His Name brings temporary shame. II. His Name brings eternal glory.

It would have been easy enough for Moses to have kept his identity concealed—don't you think? Moses was born to Hebrew parents at a time when God's chosen people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt. Due to the growing strength and numbers of the Hebrew nation, the Pharaoh of Egypt had decreed that every baby boy born to the Israelites must be put to death. To save Moses' life, his parents put him in a basket and floated him down the Nile River, where he was found by one of Pharaoh's daughters. Shortly after his birth he had been grafted into the royal family tree as a prince of Egypt. No doubt, living as a prince would have had its perks: life in the palace, a world-class education and food fit for a king. That certainly sounds better than living life like a slave. It would have been easy enough for Moses to enjoy fame and fortune and simply forget. It would have been easy enough for Moses just to blend in with the Egyptian culture and beliefs. It would have been so easy for him to forsake his people and his religion and simply allow them to fade into the desert sand. Those thoughts certainly crossed Moses' minds, I'm sure.

It would be a lot easier for us to hide our spiritual identity too, wouldn't it? Just like the devil tempted Moses to keep his faith under wraps, he tempts us to do the same. Can't you hear his sinister whisper? "It'd be easier to hide that name, "Christian" throughout the week, saving it for Sundays. You wouldn't ever have to utter that disgraceful name, *Jesus*, in public. You can simply let your faith fade. You can just go about your everyday life without having to wonder what other people think about you. There wouldn't be any awkward conversations with your neighbors. None of those strange glances or closed doors. Your life will be so much easier if you just keep quiet." It's true that life would be easier, but that doesn't mean that it'd be better—especially not when there are souls at stake.

That's why Moses wasn't willing to take the easy way out. In fact he put his faith on display when it would have been much easier to keep it hidden. It's an act of faith that Moses **refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter**. Instead of adopting his royal family, he cast his lot with the Israelite slaves. Instead

## Hebrews 11:24-26

of living a life fit for a king, **He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God.** What he did must have seemed scandalous! No doubt—shame and disgrace were heaped on him by strangers, friends and even his adopted family! You might be asking how could he do that; it was his faith that caused him to trade fortune and fame for sand and shame. He was not willing to treat the words of his religion—words like “Christ” — as curse words, words he could never pronounce. By faith, Moses willingly subjected himself to public shame for the sake of the Name.

As Christians, we too are going to face ridicule and rejection for bearing that name. You see, Jesus is a name that people hate with a passion. There will be some who tell you that Christianity isn't merely a religion—it's a monstrosity. I'm sure you've heard things like this:

“You actually believe in God? You must not be up to speed:

- *The God of the Bible is ruthless because He commanded the extermination of entire nations.*
- *God calls Himself “love” yet He damns people to hell to be punished eternally. That's heartless!*
- *Any father who punishes his innocent child like God the Father punished Jesus is sadistic.*

You don't really believe in God, *do you?*”

Sometimes, when questions like that come our way, we'd much rather treat “Christ” like a curse word than bear the heaping insults that follow our confession. I think there are times we'd rather chew on a bar of soap at home than talk about what we believe in public. You see, the honest truth is that you don't want to have any part in that shame and neither do I! Our sinful natures want nothing to do with shame or disgrace—and especially not for the sake of Christ.

However, Jesus told us in the Gospel **“If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”** As Christians, we will bear a cross—whether we want to or not. This cross is the shame and ridicule, the rejection and hardships the world dumps on us for calling ourselves followers of Christ. But how can we bear such a dreadful weight? Let's look with eyes of faith at what Moses saw:

He looked out from that palace balcony, over the hot sand dunes of the Egyptian desert to a cross at Calvary. There he saw the Anointed of God, bearing the weight of his shame, carrying the load of his disgrace, suffering for his sins. There he saw the appointed Messiah, carrying out the plan of salvation for the entire world. There he saw the Christ—Name above all names—redeem us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us. To Moses, Christ was not a curse word. No; His was a Name to proclaim.

When you consider what great lengths Christ went to for you—when you think of what great depths He sunk to for you—let that be a reminder to you that the shame and disgrace you bear for being a Christian is a light burden. Christ bore the brunt of the blow! He carried your cross and the shame of all your sins. Jesus considered you His treasure; He bought you with His holy precious blood. You were worth His life. He forgave you for all your sins, even the times when you blushed at the thought of sharing your faith—even the times when you treated His Name like a curse word. He joyfully went to that cross and scorned its shame, knowing that He was gaining your eternal glory. Now that it something to talk about!

It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to carry the weight of our crosses and gives us courage to confess the Christ. He continually perfects our faith so that we can bear the shame and the scorn that come along with being a Christian. In fact He opens our eyes and shows us their true value, just as He did for Moses. Remember that Moses **regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt.** That takes faith, doesn't it? To regard disgrace as something of value! The Holy Spirit is working in your heart to cause you to refuse to treat “Christ” like a curse word. Instead He shows you that Christ is the source of all blessings—truly a name to be on our lips at all times. The Holy Spirit empowers us in our private, personal

## Hebrews 11:24-26

lives so that we can share the hope that we have in public. He shows us that the shame others heap upon us is only temporary; the glory that Christ gives us is eternal.

It's a good thing the Holy Spirit does that because not everyone can see with the eyes of faith. There are so many faithless that look upon the crucifixion as a scandal—Jesus was simply a fraud claiming to be God and executed as public enemy number one—a convicted criminal getting what He deserved. But we see the cross by faith. We see the innocent Son of God who willingly gave His life for the salvation of sinners. Instead of regarding Jesus as something scandalous, shameful and worthless, the Holy Spirit causes us to see the cross as glorious, something worth treasuring. We see Jesus as our greatest treasure and His Name as a word for us to proclaim.

Now, I want you to know that Moses' gaze didn't stop at the cross. **He was looking ahead to his reward.** With eyes of faith, he squinted at the bright, beaming lights of Heaven. There, he saw his eternal reward. He was looking ahead to that glorious city where he would soon take up residency. A place more luxurious than his palace and of greater worth than all the treasures of Egypt. He looked through those gleaming gates to a place where they use gold like we use asphalt—they pave the streets with it. They throw the finest jewels into the crystal sea. They will build walls with the purest gold and use pearls as mortar. He strained his eyes to see the seats at the banquet table of the Lamb, one of them that had a name tag that said "Moses," signed and sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ. Look with those same eyes of faith, and you'll see a seat with your name on it, too. You'll see the reward that Christ has been preparing for you since before time began. And you know what? We're going to need every moment of all eternity to adequately thank and praise Christ, the Lord of glory.

Right now, we live in a much different world. We live in a place where many think of Christ as anything but glorious. There are those who think of His Name like a curse word. To say that word is offensive, inappropriate and shameful, and they will most certainly let us know that. Remember, though: the shame we bear now is only temporary; the reward God gives us is eternal. Let's encourage one another to take courage and confess the Christ, because in Christ, we have a name to proclaim! Amen!