

## Get a Grip on Life

† Faithful confidence like Moses (vv.1,2,5)

† Joyful hope in Jesus (vv.1-4,6)

In the name of Jesus, “*the Apostle and High Priest whom we confess,*” dear “*holy brothers*”:

Should we add, “and sisters,” as if “*brothers*” is too exclusive? The Bible says we are all included in the gracious promises of God, yet I’m convinced the Holy Spirit inspired this just right. God assigned us different roles: believing men as Christ-like servant-leaders, believing women as Christ-like servant-helpers. But how can a woman “*submit to her husband as to the Lord...in everything*” as in today’s SECOND LESSON (Ephesians 5:21-31)? How can a man “*love [his] wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*”? If husband and wife wait for each other to get it right, they will never have a loving relationship. It takes **Faithful confidence** and **Joyful hope**. But here’s the secret: All these are byproducts of something far greater: a personal relationship with God. That’s how Joshua could say in our FIRST LESSON, “*But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.*” (Joshua 24:15) Human reason cannot do it, but childlike faith will always **Get a Grip on Life**, first for...

† Faithful confidence like Moses (vv.1,2,5)

Would you want to keep the same job for forty years? Try raking pine needles alone in the forest for hours on end. I’m glad I don’t have to do that anymore. But it’s better than son Joel’s first job scraping dough off a bakery floor with a small putty knife. Or what about my classmates who could only find summer work in asphalt factories? Better than changing diapers? Most of us can find someone whose job is worse. And some might be blessed to say, “I love my job.” But not Moses. No, not Moses.

He did seem to like herding sheep and goats for father-in-law Jethro. It was quiet and peaceful, far from his murder rap back in Egypt. Forty more years of ranching might have been fine for Moses. When the LORD appeared in the burning bush, Moses tried to have someone else go. “Brother Aaron, anybody, but not me!” But the LORD would not take “No!” for an answer. Facing Pharaoh and the Exodus was bad enough. But forty years with whining millions must have been unbearable. How could Moses’ 80+ years keep his cool in the desert? In Numbers 20 he broke. First, his sister Miriam died. Then against the LORD’s command Moses struck the rock twice. Crushing was God’s rebuke of Moses and brother Aaron: “*Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.*” (Numbers 20:12 NIV) Forty years for nothing?

Who of us doesn’t feel that way sometimes? You come up with a great idea at work; someone else gets the promotion. You work on your marriage in prayer; your spouse takes the credit instead of glorifying God. You prepare your lesson, but where are the students? How can we not falter at times?

Look at God’s mercy on Moses. God still calls Moses “*faithful*” in spite of sins that cost him the Promised Land. Moses submitted to God’s will and trusted God’s grace. When God’s Word came, Moses listened and obeyed. Moses called for the best from God and from God got the strength to do his best. God forgave Moses. 1500 years later Moses got to stand with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration to see Jesus’ glory on His “*faithful*” way to the cross. Moses is enjoying heaven today.

God’s kindness to Moses gives us **Faithful confidence**. Here in Hebrews: “*God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.*” (Hebrews 6:10 NIV) Jesus also promises: “*I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*” (John 15:5 NIV)

If you really want to **Get a Grip on Life**, “*fix your eyes,*” glue them down tight, “*on Jesus, the apostle*” sent by God to be our “*high priest,*” the Mediator between us and God. He totally understands

what tempts us to give up. Just before our text, *“Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”* (2:18) Christ overcame discouragement with **Faithful confidence**. Listen in Isaiah: *“I have labored to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing. Yet what is due me is in the LORD’s hand, and my reward is with my God. And now the LORD says— he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength— he says: ‘It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.’”* (Isaiah 49:4-6 NIV) That’s why we are worshiping here today. From north and south, east and west, souls have come to fix their eyes on the LORD’s Christ and **Get a Grip on Life**. Jesus is the Door to the heart of God and a relationship with Him. Thanks to God’s faithfulness we have...

### † Joyful hope in Jesus (vv.1-4,6)

Like Moses, our Lord Jesus *“was faithful to the one who appointed him.”* He loved God’s Word even as a preteen listening and asking questions in the temple. Bible study was a great joy for Jesus even when His parents criticized Him for staying so long. As our righteous Substitute before God, Jesus went home with His parents and literally *“submitted Himself”* to them. (Luke 2:51) When His heartrending prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane met with silence from our Father in heaven, Jesus still pressed on to die on the cross *“faithful to the one who appointed him.”* He is the Savior of all.

If you were Jewish, this might sound strange, *“Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses....”* More honor than the greatest Jewish prophet? That’s quite a statement. Claiming to be God is why the Jewish religious leaders had Jesus executed for blasphemy. That’s like being hauled into court and accused of being Minnesotan. How can you deny it if your driver’s license says so? Jesus’ license from heaven was all His miracles. Making water into wine proved He is the Creator. *“All things were made by Him and without Him nothing was made – not one thing.”* (John 1:3 TPA)

If you’re American, you know why the holy writer says something this obvious: *“Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.”* Some folks have actually convinced themselves that first there was nothing, then nothing exploded and became everything. Was there some primordial mass that exploded? Where did it come from and who ignited such a spark? Buy a field. Wait for a house to grow out of the ground by itself. If big bangs work, why are we afraid of terrorist bombs? Couldn’t more buildings be built by more big bangs?

If you’re a Christian, you don’t want to give up on the great Creator who made you so fearfully and wonderfully. Did you hear how British surgeons have added adult stem cells to crushed bone? Some patients are walking out of hospitals no longer needing their hip replacement. But as one doctor put it, “Embryonic stem cells are nowhere near treating any patient for any condition.”

We have **Joyful hope** because God *“saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”* (Titus 3:5-7 NIV)

**Joyful hope** is literally “bragging hope,” as when a little boy carried from a raging flood, brags, I knew we could do it, Dad. Who’s gripping whom? After Hurricane Katrina thousands were evacuated from rooftops and attics in New Orleans. “We knew you’d come!” But how many realized it was one Air Force officer who thought to overlay Google images on old maps to find washed out streets? When you **Get a Grip on Life** you’ll see. Life already had a grip on you. Your personal relationship with God is waiting and calling for you with the same mercy shown Moses and the grace that gave him such **Faithful confidence**. Who’s gripping whom? Jesus says, *“No one will snatch [you] out of my hand.”* (John 10:28) You have bragging rights because of what God did for you. So **Joyful** is our **hope in Jesus**. Amen.