

# An Offering of Faith - Exodus 20:18-26

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 01 June 2025

Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everybody. Welcome to Calvary Chapel, Charlotte. What a blessing to be in God's presence, with God's people, to worship the Lord, and to study His Word.

Well, we are in Exodus chapter 20, if you want to turn there. We've been working our way through the Ten Commandments, and we finished them last week. Wonderful time. I don't know, what was that?

Like six weeks of looking at the Ten Commandments, and I'm just sitting in them, foundational, so foundational to our understanding of who God is, our understanding of His Word, foundational to who Israel is, as God is establishing Israel as a national identity, having been slaves for centuries, and now coming out of Egypt, and God is establishing them.

He says, this is how I want to establish you as a people, as an identity. You're going to be identified primarily with my Word, my Word, and my presence. God gives them His Word. We're going to see, as we end this chapter today, He's going to say, I didn't give you an image, or an idol.

What did I give you? I gave you my Word. That's how you're going to be identified. That's how you're going to be a people. So we've gone through the Ten Commandments. We've looked at them. We've looked at, Thou shalt have no other God before me.

[ 1 : 15 ] Thou shalt not make into any graven images, nor bow down and worship them. That was actually 11 commandments. Remember we said, we lumped that into one, so it's commandment 2A and 2B.

But commandment three, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with promise, so that you may live long upon the land.

You shall not kill, you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. And then the last one, you shall not covet, but you shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

Yeah, linking that there. So as we move through this section, remember we ended last week saying, well, who's my neighbor? As the law winds down with this look, we started looking at God, we shall have no other gods before me, I am the Lord your God.

And then we end with our neighbor. Well, treat your neighbor well. Well, who's my neighbor? And who is a good neighbor? Well, a neighbor is just one who needs fulfillment. And a good neighbor is one who brings fulfillment because we live in mutual, a mutual relationship with one another, a reciprocal relationship.

[ 2 : 21 ] You have needs and I have needs, right? A neighbor is one who has a need. And a good neighbor is one who seeks to meet that need. But what can we not do? We saw this going through the law. I can't come to you and demand that you meet my need.

I cannot take from you. But boy, I can give. I can give whatever I want, whenever I want. from my fulfillment, which comes from the Lord, into your fulfillment. And what a beautiful society, church, relationship, family that is when both parties are looking to give into fulfillment instead of looking to receive fulfillment.

1 Corinthians 10, 24 says, let no one seek his own good but the good of his neighbor. It's such a simple verse. It's kind of like reading, you shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal. They're just very simple commands. Well, who can't do that? But how often do I do that? Let no one seek his own good. Well, I usually spend a lot of time seeking my own good but the good of his neighbor.

Sin consumes but love fulfills. And so Israel now finds himself here. They're standing at the base of Mount Sinai. It's on fire. It's smoking. And they're standing there.

[ 3 : 30 ] There's boundaries that have been set and they've received God's word, spoken to them off of the mountain. And they've just heard all of this. If you turn back real quick with me to Exodus 19 if you want to.

I'll just read it otherwise. But in Exodus 19, it tells us in verse 18 it says in Mount Sinai was all together on smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace and the whole mountain quaked greatly.

So as we've just spent all these weeks going through the Ten Commandments you can turn back to Exodus 20 if you want. That's the setting. That's the setting they've just received this word of God from. And now they have to decide how they're going to receive it.

How do you receive God's word? How do you take that in? Are they going to take the law and say, all right, well, this is a heavy thing. Are they going to believe it? Are they going to accept it? That's what we're going to look at today as we look at this offering of faith.

As God brings Israel to this place of an altar, of an offering, of sacrifice, how do they receive it? It has to be received by faith. The law has established priorities for this nation, for this people.

[ 4 : 41 ] As Israel is hearing God's commands off the mountain, the priority is what? Well, I am the Lord, your God. The priority is God. They set boundaries around them.

They needed those boundaries for what? To promote life and protect love. We said the law protects love. It says, don't do this because love wouldn't do that. I need to protect love. Don't murder. Don't commit adultery.

Don't defraud your neighbor. Let's protect love. But ultimately, it keeps God in view. The law is to keep God in view at all time for this nation. This isn't to be kept apart from God.

This isn't to be taken in as, well, it's just something we do. By the time Jesus came with the Pharisees, they had not kept God in view. The law had become something that was to promote their own life, to protect their own interest, to set boundaries around what they thought was their own righteousness and holiness.

And their priorities were all screwed up. But the law is not meant to be kept to establish our righteousness. The law cannot be kept in that way, says Paul in Galatians chapter 3.

[ 5 : 46 ] This is quite a long section. I'm just condensing it using these two verses to get the flavor of it. But in verse 11, he says that no man is justified by the law on the sight of God. It's evident. For the just shall live by faith.

He's quoting Habakkuk. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. The point is, the promise did not come by law.

The promise comes by faith. Blessing comes by faith. So he's saying you can't be justified by the law so the law has another purpose. What's the purpose of the law? I'm not meant to keep it.

The law is still God's word. The law is still God's commands but it's still something that must be received by faith. Just because we're reading in the Old Testament doesn't mean we change our view when we flip to the New Testament and say, well, okay, we take all this by faith.

But in the Old Testament, well, there's like this law and there's this like sequence you have to keep and no, we still have to receive it by faith. 2 Corinthians 5, 7, we walk by faith, not by sight.

[ 6 : 50 ] What is faith? Well, Hebrews 11, 1, faith is a substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. What does that mean? Faith is the substance of a thing hoped for.

Well, faith is only as great as this object, right? If my object is great, my faith is great. It doesn't matter. You can have great faith. It doesn't matter how big your faith.

You're not going to find, actually, when you read in Scripture, you won't see where it talks about growing, a growing faith, a big faith. We say that. You know, we want to grow in our faith to grow. I think what it means is we want our understanding of God to grow.

We want to trust Him with more areas of our life. But the disciples said the same thing to Jesus. They said, Lord, increase our faith. And his response was no. No.

If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, be removed, and the seed will be removed. What's his point? The point isn't how big your faith is, how big is the object of your faith, right?

[ 7 : 49 ] If I have faith in something that's unfaithful, I can have all the faith I want. And my faith will be very small because the object of my faith is small. But God is great because God is faithful.

I can have faith in something that's faithful. It has a great potential to have the ability to keep the faith because He's full of faith. He is a faithful God. So our faith can't fail. That's why your faith can't fail if it's in God. You will fail. I will fail. Anybody fail this week? No, you don't have to raise your hand. But God won't fail. So my faith won't fail. So faith is the substance of the things hoped for. So God has promised me something. Do I have it? I don't. But because He cannot fail, well, it's as good as done. I have it because He said so. Politicians promise us things all the time. What is the substance of what you have? Yeah, well, the evidence of the thing not seen.

[ 8 : 52 ] Well, how do you know God's going to do that? How do you know God is going to resurrect you? Because I have the evidence of His word that's never failed. Because I have the evidence in my own personal experience that God has never failed.

And I have the evidence all through history that God's word will not fail. In other words, the promise is enough if the promiser is sure. The promiser is sure.

The promise is enough. Walking by faith is simply that. What has God said and promised? Do I believe it and do I act on it? A sure faith will always stand sure when that faith is sure of its object. What's your object in? So the problem is as we approach the law, we can think, well, I'm going to shift my faith in my ability to do this.

My ability to look not on every man his own things but on things of another. My ability to seek not my own good but my neighbor's good. Man, I'm doing a bad job of this. I am failing.

[ 9 : 51 ] Yeah, because my faith is in myself. Not good. Not a good object of faith. But if my faith is in God, then my object is sure. Paul would talk about this idea of faith being an offering and combining it with this idea of offering and sacrifice.

In Philippians 2.17, he says, yes, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. What's he saying?

Saying there is not anything worth having compared to faith. All things are worth sacrificing for your faith. And we say faith doesn't mean like, you know, faith-based enterprises or faith-based groups. That's like some vague term. That's like saying a very loving society but what do they do? You know? It has to have an object. So when Paul is saying your faith is worth any sacrifice, he's saying God, your faith in God, trusting God is worth anything.

It's worth your emotions. It's worth your troubles. And he said, Jesus will say it's worth your family. Don't give up your trust in God. And that's where we come now. As Moses and all the people are standing at the mountain, they've heard God's word.

[ 11 : 03 ] What are they going to do with God's word? How are they going to receive God's word? By faith? By sight? Let's pick up in verse 18 of Exodus chapter 20.

And all the people, they saw the thunderings and lightnings. I wish this verse started. And all the people heard the word of the Lord and received it gladly.

And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings and the noise. That word noise means voice. Literally voices of the trumpet and the mountain smoking.

When the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. The word they removed is interesting because it kind of seems redundant. They removed and stood afar off.

They moved and moved. But removed means to quake or to waver. So when they saw it, they quaked, they wavered. Interesting here, the wording the scripture use.

[ 12 : 01 ] They saw the thunderings and lightnings and the noise. Do you see noise? Scripture's letting us know they're looking by sight. It's not they heard it. They heard God's word, but they saw all of this.

Israel responded by sight, not by faith. They quaked. They wavered. And the result was they drew away because faith draws near where sight creates distance.

If we respond by faith, we draw near. We don't take account of what we see. If I respond by sight, I'm going to respond to what I see and sight leads to distance. Israel is responding to God and to God's word in light of what they perceived, sight, instead of what they believed, faith.

They're responding. They're saying, this is what I perceive and I'm going to respond to that. Now, the enemy loves that if we do that because what he'll do many times is he will come and he will bring something good out of that.

Well, I'm going to respond to what I perceive and Satan goes, yeah, and look at the benefit that's come from it. Well, now he's got us and we continue to live a life of sight and perception and we're

up and down and we're all over and we think things are going good because I perceive they're going good in my life.

[ 13 : 15 ] I perceive my relationship with God looks good because it's not dark and scary and thundering and lightning and then the enemy just goes, yank, and yanks that chain and changes our perception or our emotions or our feelings and we're down and we're down again.

Israel chose to believe what they saw instead of the word that they heard. That's what they focused on. We do not draw near to God by our understanding or natural perception. We only draw near by faith.

Faith allows us to understand what we never would have naturally. Understanding comes only after faith. The more we act in faith in response to God, the more understanding we'll have about God. It doesn't work the other way around. Right? Think of when Joshua was at the Jordan and he's got all the people there and God commands him and says, Joshua, I want you to tell the priest to take the ark, the priest that bear the ark to head into the Jordan River and when they're in the river, I will part the waters and it says that it wasn't until the soles of the feet of the priest were in the water that it parted.

So you got two in front and two in back. Imagine being the two guys in the front and you're in the water and it hasn't parted and then there's two behind and then they come in and it parts.

[ 14 : 30 ] Also a good picture of how important fellowship is and how important we are to one another. You know? Why isn't the water parting? Well, God's like, I'm waiting for these other two. They got to get in. But what was in between them? God's presence.

And it hits the water and boom. If they had stood on the edge and waited like God promised he's going to part this water and we're just going to wait until he does it. But they wouldn't go forward by faith because they perceived something impossible.

So for us, understanding comes after faith. The more I act in faith, my response to God and his word, the more understanding I gain about God. Peter says, in 2 Peter, in chapter one, he's writing about his experience on a mountain where he experienced the presence of God.

It's not Mount Sinai. He's not even talking about Mount Zion or Jerusalem, you know, the resurrection. He's talking about Mount Hermon, which was the Mount of Transfiguration. And he talks about a voice that he heard in 2 Peter 1.18.

He says, this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mountain. We've also, and then he says, we have also a more sure word of prophecy.

[ 15 : 38 ] Peter says, I was there. I saw the light. I saw the change. He was sleeping. Him, Peter, Peter, James, and John were asleep because Jesus was praying. It seems to be their MO. Jesus is going to pray?

Man, you know how long this takes. Let's go sleep. So they wake up and all of a sudden and it says, there's Jesus and there's Elijah and there's Moses talking with him. And Peter then begins to speak and says, Lord, it's good for us to be here.

Let us make three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah. And this is a voice from heaven came and says, this is my son. Hear you him. Listen to his word. And Peter now here is saying, listen guys, I heard the voice, but I've also been obedient.

I've listened to the word. I've listened to the son. We have a more sure word of prophecy. Where until you do well that you take heed and unto a light that shines in a dark place until a day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts.

And Revelation tells us, Jesus says, I am the bright and morning star, the day star that arises in their hearts. That light shines in a dark place and sometimes our perception is it's very dark. It's very hard to see what's going on, but we take heed to God's word.

[ 16 : 44 ] The more faith I have in God and his word, the more I act upon that, the more I understand about who God is. Proverbs 16, 3, commit your works unto the Lord, dot, dot, dot, by faith and your thoughts shall be established.

We want it the other way around. God established my thoughts. God, please just show me everything and then I'll do it if I think it's good. And the Lord says, no, I just want you to walk forward into that.

Choose to believe what you understand of God through his word. Sight gave God the appearance to Israel, unfortunately, of something other than who he was.

Instead of looking at God through faith, instead of responding to his word, they saw and they then appeared, God appeared to them to be something totally different than who he was. We're going to get down further and they're going to say to Moses eventually, Moses, don't let God speak to us, we'll die.

What? Did any of the Ten Commandments we just go through say, and if you don't do this, I'm going to smoke you. And if you don't do this, oh, I'm so angry with you. No. All of these things, if you do them, they'll lead to life.

[17:50] They protect love. They set boundaries. They establish our priorities. But sight is giving God the appearance of being something other than he is. And when we try and view what God's doing without faith, without the eyes of faith, very often we'll come to the wrong conclusion of what God's doing in our life.

The reality is when we come into God's presence, it is very awe-inspiring. It's very powerful. As Israel is standing here, in the presence of God with the mountain is quaking and it's dark and there's lightning and there's fire, it is awe-inspiring.

It is powerful, but it's a glorious thing as well. We've been going through Revelation. We see where John called up before the throne into the presence of God. It's a glorious thing.

It's powerful. It's awe-inspiring. And immediately I was in the spirit and behold, a throne was set in heaven and one sat on the throne. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which were the seven spirits of God.

It's an awe-inspiring thing and a powerful thing. But who else was before the throne? The Lamb. As long as the Lamb is worthy to be before the throne, then you and I are worthy to be before the throne.

[19:03] That is how we can stand there. It's awe-inspiring. It is powerful. But it is also a life-giving event. Psalm 1611, Now show me the path of life and your presence is fullness of joy.

At your right hand there are pleasures forevermore. God's presence is powerful. It can be intimidating. As we come into his presence, it seems like, God, things are supposed to get better and it's getting darker. The noise in my life is getting louder.

I'm quaking and shaking and... But that life giving event that God sent into the world in that glorious moment where it says, and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God and saying, glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill to men.

What an awe-inspiring moment to come into God's presence. How even greater for God's presence to come into our world. What a powerful moment. But what a life-giving moment as Jesus was sent into this world.

God's presence for you and I. The power and presence of God cannot be, should not be, and is not to be processed without the promise of God in view.

[20:09] We cannot process that. How can we process the presence and power of God apart from his promise? Man, he seems so... He's the creator. He's so big. He's righteous and I'm not.

And how do we even interface with that? How do we process that? Well, it's through his promise. It's through the word. Remember when Jesus in the upper room and in John 14, he's wrapping everything up with his disciples.

He's just like overloading them. Kind of like I do with sometimes you guys. You know, he opened the fire hose and it's like, here you go. Take that home and chew on it. But Jesus does it in a way that they don't feel overwhelmed and they're getting it.

And at this point, Philip says to him, he's just like overcome and he's like, Lord, show us the Father. Show us that awe-inspiring, powerful God. And it suffices.

Jesus, you just show us that. Maybe he's thinking of the mountain when the commands were given to Moses and the people. And Jesus said unto him, have I been such a long time with you and yet you've not known me, Philip?

[21:10] Jesus doesn't say anything exasperatedly, right? I would say it like, boy, I feel like I've been with you forever and you still aren't kidding. Right? As we do with our kids, how many times do we come back around to this?

Have I been so long a time with you and yet you've not known me, Philip? What is Jesus saying? Don't waste time with him. Man, when you have opportunity to be with Jesus, get to know him.

When you're in his presence, make sure you're getting to know him. Don't miss it. He that's seen me has seen the Father. And how sayest thou then, show us the Father? You see, we can't process the power and presence of God without the promise of God in view, without Jesus.

How could we come into God's presence? How do we know who he is without Jesus, without that being revealed to us? John 1.1, In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

How does God show us his presence? And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory. The glory is the only begotten of the Father. Glorious, powerful presence of God, full of grace and truth.

[ 22 : 13 ] That's how we come to God. That's the process by which we come. But how do I know? How do I know if I'm walking by faith? As Israel's receiving God's Word here and they're receiving it by sight and they're pulling away, how do I know if I'm walking by faith?

How do I know as a believer in Jesus Christ if I'm walking with the promise in view or if I'm not? I think first, how do I respond to the presence of God?

Am I drawing near or standing at a distance? Do I stand firm or do I waver? Walking by faith is determined by how I respond to God's presence so you can test yourself.

Am I drawing near to God in my daily walk in my daily life or do I find myself pulling back? Do I find myself looking at my circumstances and perceiving by my natural understanding what's going on around me and going, God, I just don't know what you're doing so I'm going to pull away because I can't understand and it's, I'm afraid.

Or am I processing by faith and saying, God, I know you got this. I'm going to press into you. How do I respond to the presence of God? James 4, 8, draw near to God and he will draw near to you in any circumstance or situation.

[ 23 : 27 ] Psalm 73, 28, it's good for me to draw near to God. Walking by faith is determined by how I respond to God's presence. It's how I can know am I drawing near, am I pulling away?

And they said unto Moses in verse 19, you speak with us, Moses, and we will hear, but do not let God speak with us lest we die. Lest we die.

The entrance of his word brings life. Peter would say to Jesus, where else will we go, Lord, for you have the words of life. Don't speak with us lest we die.

Sight seeks what's familiar. It seeks what's comfortable because sight is based on the flesh. The flesh is always seeking a way around God's commands because the commands of God are very uncomfortable for our flesh.

Galatians 5, 24 says, and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. All right? If you're Mr. Flesh and you say, hey, I'm going to crucify you, that doesn't sound very fun.

[ 24 : 31 ] Doesn't sound very comfortable. Doesn't sound something I want to partake in. Sounds painful. So that's what sight does. A sight seeks what's familiar. And they said, Moses, you speak with us.

We want something familiar, something comfortable. The other thing is, if I can bring God's word down to the level of just the word of a man, well, now it just becomes another voice among equals. It's just another voice, right? Moses, you speak with us. I don't want to have to interface with God personally in my own time. And then, if Moses says something I don't like, I can just say, well, that's just Moses' perspective on that.

It's just his interpretation, you know? Maybe that's good for him. It's one of the reasons that I don't make direct application when I teach. I don't give you like the four or five points that last week we said how to love your neighbor.

And it's like, well, you could cut his grass, you could take him a meal when he's sick, maybe clean up his dog. No, don't do that. Maybe, you know, you, well then, if those three, four, five things you look at and you go, I'm doing all those.

[ 25 : 31 ] I'm good. I am a loving neighbor. Or you look at them and go, well, that's, that's the pastor. That's the way he, that's not really me. Right? You can say, that's just a voice of a man.

It's just one among equals. But if it's God's word, if it's general application through the interpretation of scripture and the Holy Spirit makes direct application to your heart and says, hey, this is what the principle of a good neighbor is.

One who seeks fulfillment in other people's life and isn't seeking to be fulfilled. Are you doing that in your life? And then God brings into your mind that person or that situation and you go, oh, shoot.

And you do respond.

Do I respond in faith? Do I trust that God you're not out to get me? You're out to bless me. And so they say, Moses, just you speak to us. Bring this down to a level that's comfortable to us, but also we can kind of decide what we want to do with this.

When we walk by sight, our experience, our perception, just like Israel, it's causing them to view God's word in light of what they think it's capable of, what they expect it to be capable of.

[ 26 : 33 ] Their natural perception is taking God's word and thinking it's going to produce death. That which is intended for life is going to remove life, they think. How many people think that?

How many people you meet and think, well, God's word just tells me what I can't do. Don't do this and don't do that and don't do this. As if God's word was meant to remove life. God's word is meant to give life to us.

Faith views God's word in light of what it promises to be. What is God's word promised to be in my life? Whether I'm feeling that, experiencing that, or seeing that.

Sight is viewing God's word as something negative, something detrimental in my life. Whenever I'm viewing by sight, whenever I'm not walking by faith, I can know there's a good test. How do I know if I'm walking by faith or by sight?

What is my response to God's word? What's my response to his presence? Am I drawing near? Am I pulling back? What is my response to God's word? Am I accepting his word? Or am I looking to replace it with something more comfortable and familiar?

[ 27 : 39 ] Nothing wrong with commentaries, devotions, books, teachings, but it cannot replace God's word just because it's more comfortable, just because it's more familiar.

You know, well, I like to turn over here, I read it, oh, I just feel so good. But has it dealt with the issue? Yes, it can hurt, man, it can poke and it can cut deep when it needs to.

The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder, soul and spirit and joints and marrow as a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. God's word cuts deep.

It's not always the most comfortable thing, but it always brings life, always leads to life. David says in Psalm 119, 93, I will never forget your precepts, for with them you have given me life.

I will never forget that which brings me life. God's word may produce discomfort, as it is right here with Israel, as they're receiving this, and I think they're just thinking, we didn't know we left Egypt, we're going to have to come here and be expected to be responsible and accountable.

[ 28 : 45 ] We're used to being taken care of as slaves, and God's saying, I want you to live free. Don't be a slave anymore. Walk in newness of life, live in the freedom that you have. Yeah, but I feel so much more comfortable, just when I'm feeling fulfilled.

Live in discomfort. Why? God's word may produce discomfort, but it's also producing life at the same time. And Moses says to the people, do not fear, don't fear.

There's going to be two words for fear here. He's going to say, don't fear, and he says, for God's come to prove you that his fear may be before your face, and that you sin not. Well, that's kind of contradictory.

But sight always leads to fear, because sight can't see past the moment. Why do I get fearful in this moment? Because I can't see what's past it. Sight leads to fear because it can't see the future.

Now, God knows the future and his word, it directs me, it's a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. And faith says, I don't know the future. I don't know what's beyond this scary moment, maybe it's another scary moment, but I know that God is faithful.

[ 29 : 48 ] Sight will always lead to fear because it can never see past what it can see. Paul would tell us in 2 Corinthians 4.18, he says, we are not to look at those things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

For the things which are seen are temporal. They don't have a real substance. They don't have something that actually is going to last. There's nothing, where faith is a substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, the things that we see are the opposite.

There's no substance. There's nothing there. He says, nowhere to look at the things which are eternal. The things which are not seen are eternal. Fear nothing, now, Moses says.

Fear not, fear nothing, fear never, fear neither. That's what that means, those three words in there. Don't fear anything, fear nothing. Never fear and fear neither anyone or anything that comes against you.

Why? Because God. Fear not because God. No, don't fear, Moses said to people. Please don't. You know, I can just see them as they're pulling away and Moses is there and they're like, Moses, no.

[ 30 : 56 ] He's like, what are you doing? Like, you speak to us, God's gonna kill us. He's like, don't fear. No, no, God's not coming for that reason. God has come to prove you, to test you, to try you. Doesn't mean like, you know, to tempt you or cause you to do something that would bring destruction.

He wants them to see that, hey, guess what? God wanted Israel to know that as long as they keep their eyes on him, they're never gonna fail. God will be before your face, it says.

That word fear, that the fear of God may be before your face at all times, is awe. That means keep the object of your awe in view, is what he's saying. God has come to try you.

He's come to prove to you that as long as you keep your eyes on him, you won't fail. He's not come to destroy you. God's word will reveal the state of my relationship with God.

It will reveal how I respond to God. What is my relationship to God? Do I keep him in view or am I pulling away from him? But it's also meant to build my relationship.

[ 31 : 56 ] God's word builds us up. It doesn't just leave us there. If we respond by faith, if Israel had responded by faith. But God is so good.

He's so faithful. He doesn't say, I'm done with these people. He doesn't like send out a tongue of fire from the mountain and whoom, that's it. He deals with us where we're at.

1 John 4, 18 says, there is no fear in love. But perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love or is not complete, is not whole.

There's still something missing within the love. There is no fear in love. Remember, we talked, it was last week, saying love has no boundaries. Right? I don't have to put up boundaries.

I have to fear in love. Drawing near to God is a fearful thing, but in Jesus, it's not something to be feared. It's an awe-inspiring thing to draw near to God, to be in his presence.

[ 32 : 57 ] But in Jesus, it's never meant to be feared. The fear's been removed. There's no fear in love. Love casts out fears. Fear has torment and love won't torment. How do you know if you're walking in love?

Is it mingled with fear? Is your relationship with God? No, okay. It's not like we just say, hey God, how you doing? Hope you're doing good today. I need this, this, this, this. Talk to you tomorrow. See you later. No, that's, there was the awe.

We keep the object of our awe in view. But when I come to God in a respect that doesn't fear his word, that doesn't fear what he's going to do to me, that I realize it's a relationship of love, then I draw near.

We draw near because of love. So the people now, they continue to stand afar off, verse 21. But Moses drew near under the thick darkness where God was.

Moses tried. He tried to convince the people. He said, guys, don't do this. Please draw near. God is just here because he wants you to know that he won't fail you and you won't if you keep your eyes on him.

[ 34 : 00 ] Trust him. Trust his word. Moses now draws near, but he draws near by what? Well, obviously, he's by faith. He's not responding to what he sees. He's not responding to the darkness and the fear. Israel's been so used to this life of living in Egypt for all of these years with all these false gods, gods that are fearful, distant, and deadly, and that's how they're treating Jehovah, how they're treating their God.

But Moses, he draws near, and if he has to, he'll do it alone. Faith doesn't take crowds or circumstances into view. Faith draws near. How do I know if I'm walking by faith or walking by fight? By fight. Some of you walk by fight, too, and that's not good, either. I've lived that. Don't walk by fight. Am I walking by sight? Am I walking by faith?

Am I responding to what is fearful or to what is faithful? Will I draw near to God no matter how dark it grows? Moses responded to what was faithful, God's word, not what was fearful, what he saw, what he's experienced.

He drew near no matter how dark it grew. God, the closer I get to you, the darker it's getting. I thought as I got closer it was going to be light and it's darker and it's scarier. That's just what it looks like.

[ 35 : 13 ] But you're also drawing near to God's presence and his presence is one of love. Walking by faith is determined by how I respond to the fearful and to the faithful.

How do I know if I'm walking by faith? How am I responding to the fearful in my life? Am I responding in love or fear? Do I draw away?

Do I pull back from God? Do I think, God, you're out to get me? Or do I respond faithful and say, God, I know that you love me and I trust you and I love you and I know you're going to work through this situation. How do I respond to the faithful things in life?

How do I respond to it when it doesn't look like I expect it to? When it's dark? When it seems like the more I walk by faith, God, the more I'm trusting you and your word, the darker it's getting. The less people I've got around me supporting me. I'm alone, trusting you, walking by faith. Will I draw near to God? Will I draw near to where God is, as Moses says here, no matter how dark it grows?

[ 36 : 16 ] And the Lord then faithfully speaks to Moses and he didn't just want to speak to Moses. He would have spoken to all of them if they had drawn near. The Lord said to Moses, Thus you shall say unto the children of Israel, get back to Egypt, I'm through with you.

You had your chance. No. He says, Say to the children of Israel, You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. I have spoken with you and you shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall you make unto you gods of gold.

What is he saying? You remind them, Moses, if they won't hear, remind them that my word came to them with no physical or earthly representation. My word did not come to them through an idol or through something that they needed to hold dear to manifest my word to them.

God's word was intended to be received personally and by all. That's how it is today. God's word is intended for us to receive personally. It's important for us to be in fellowship. It's important for us to be in the word.

Yesterday, we were in Ephesians 4 as we were at with men's discipleship and looking at how God has equipped those in the body for the edification and growth of the body and that we're to be all built up so that every joint supplies through love.

[ 37 : 27 ] What is every joint supplying? So that we're supposed to speak the truth in love. We're supposed to grow in love. So love is what flows through our veins. Right? Love is what flows through each part of the body.

If you get an injury, that heals because it's hooked to the body. But it doesn't replace our personal relationship with the Lord. You can't go home and be like, well, the pastor said this to me.

You know, Moses said, so you need your own personal relationship with the Lord. We need to hear from him personally. God's word is intended to be received personally. How terrible when we remove ourselves from that place of personally experiencing God's word.

Right? To remove myself from that. When was the last time God's word spoke to me? But God is faithful. He'll meet all his people where they're at. He's not going to say, hey, you know what?

If you're only going to listen to Moses, I'm not even going to speak. He's like, no, I will meet you where you're at. But God's desire is not to leave us where we're at. God's desire is to move us always closer and closer to that personal relationship, that personal word to ourselves.

[ 38 : 34 ] A faith that does not rely upon sight as Moses' faith is then able to be supported by sight. As Moses draws into God's presence and become closer to God's presence, he's seeing the same thing that Israel is seeing, but it's not producing the same result in him because he's drawing near by faith and now he's seeing all the evidence of God and going, wow, God.

Wow, this is you. This is amazing. Sight then supports faith. It doesn't act against it. And the Lord says, instead of coming to me by some idol as you're used to or as you've lived in Egypt with these gods that just produce, you know, death, distance, and fear, you don't need an idol.

I've spoken to you by my word. You're not going to have a physical representation, a place to meet with me like that in this world. And the Lord then says to Moses, oh, I read verse 23, I'm sorry.

An altar of earth in verse 24, you shall make unto me and shall sacrifice thereon. Man was to meet with God not through an idol but at an altar. You're not to have an idol, you're not to have a false god, you're not going to have something that's going to represent me, but you're going to meet with me at an altar.

Hebrews 10, 7, the writer of Hebrews is quoting the Psalms and he says, then said I, lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God.

[ 40 : 05 ] Speaking of Jesus, the Son, by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. We don't meet with God through an idol.

We meet in an altar where an offering was made and where a sacrifice was given. He says, I come to do your will and then it says to us through which will we are sanctified.

Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. I don't have to bring an offering to convince God to receive me or be pleased. I'm also not going to create some idol or some place or something in my life that represents whether it's a person, a Moses, or whether it's some experience.

This is how I interface with God. God says, no, the only way you're going to do that is at the altar where I put sacrifice. Jesus said in Matthew 20, 28, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.

He came for sacrifice. So Jesus didn't come so we could figure out what he looked like and try and worship an image. He says, well, I came for sacrifice. I came for offering.

[ 41 : 15 ] In verse 24, an altar of earth you shall make unto me. shall sacrifice thereon. The place where man meets with God is a place of sacrifice and that sacrifice was upon an altar of earth like mounted up dirt.

We're going to read eventually that they could also do stone if there was no dirt available. There's something else that was made from dirt. You know what else was made from dirt? Genesis 2, 7, the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul an altar of earth you shall make unto me and there he'll sacrifice.

Philippians 2 says that Jesus being fashioned as a man, Jesus allowed himself to become an altar of dirt, to become a place that was built from dirt.

And he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also has highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name. 1 Peter 3, 18, for Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit.

An altar of earth you shall make unto me and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt offerings, your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In all places where I record my name I will come unto you and I will bless you.

[ 42 : 39 ] But we will meet with God at the place of the altar where the sacrifice, made of dirt, altar of dirt, formed of dirt, but a sacrifice accepted to God. At that altar of earth we find a sacrifice for sin, it tells us in verse 24 in Exodus 20.

There's an offering, a burnt offering. The burnt offering would be for sin. We see an offering of peace at the altar of earth in your peace offerings, in your sheep, in your oxen.

We see a blessing. I will bless you. We see a name where I'll put my name and a presence. I will come unto you. As we come to Jesus, that offering that God has, his very presence that he has formed out of the dirt, the sacrifice for sin and offering of peace is a blessing, a name, and a presence.

Fear removed these people, God's people, Israel, from personally hearing of the sacrifice and the promised peace and blessing that was theirs. It removed them.

Their fear removed them from a place where they could receive promise, peace, and blessing as they pulled away from this place where they would personally hear about this sacrifice. They had to hear about it through Moses. Praise God that we can still respond when our hearts are away from God and God speaks through someone else.

[ 43 : 55 ] We say, you know, I should probably, that made a lot of sense what they said. I don't have what they have. They seem so close to the Lord. They have a personal relationship with him where they're in his presence and they're receiving his promise and they're acting upon it.

I wonder how they do that. How do I know if I'm walking by faith or by sight? Am I looking for peace and blessing apart from sacrifice?

Am I thinking I can find it some other way than the cross or even in my own life? Am I thinking that somehow I can obtain peace and I can obtain blessing without there being sacrifice?

Israel was to come to meet with God at the altar. They're to bring the offering, their offering, as they meet with God they would have to sacrifice something. But it's there we find a personal promise, a personal peace and a personal presence.

Romans 12.1 I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. Am I walking by faith? [ 45 : 00 ] Am I looking for peace and blessing apart from sacrifice? Am I thinking that I can come into God's presence and have this personal relationship with Him apart from sacrifice? Well first the sacrifice of the cross and then this sacrifice.

I live a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God. Walking by faith is determined by how I respond to sacrifice. How do I respond to Jesus' sacrifice?

Obviously. I'm not going to believe that. Okay, you're definitely not walking by faith. You're not even in the faith. But having responded to that now being in the faith, am I walking by faith? How do I continue to respond to sacrifice?

When God says, hey, lay that on the altar. Oh Lord, I don't know about that. Verse 25, and if you shall make me an altar of stone, so if there's not, if you've been to Israel or you've seen pictures, there's a lot of rocks, not as much dirt.

If you make me an altar of stone, go ahead, but you'll not build it of hewn stone. Don't think, well this is my opportunity to show what I can do. I'm going to fashion this. I'm going to decorate it.

[ 46 : 01 ] For if you lift up a tool upon it, you've polluted it. Whatever we bring in our own efforts, our own flesh, it always pollutes.

The flesh will always pollute. The Lord says, don't even, don't even try. Galatians 6, 8, he that sows the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. He that sows the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.

But Jesus is both our altar of earth and our altar of stone, isn't he? Jesus is the place of sacrifice where we are to meet with God. Another Peter and Jesus story.

Jesus is asking them, you know, who do you, who do men say that I am? Well, some say you're Elijah, some say you're prophets, some say you're Moses. Well, who do the Pharisees say that I am? And he says, but who do you say that I am?

In Matthew 16, Peter answered and said, well, you're the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered him and said, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood is not revealed this unto you.

[ 47 : 09 ] Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for flesh and blood is not revealed to you that I am the Christ, the son of the living God. But my father's revealed that which is in heaven. And I say unto you that you are Peter.

You're my little buddy. You're my little rock, my little stone. You're like my pet rock. Jesus, Peter's his pet rock. And I say unto you, you're Peter, and upon this rock of me being the Christ, the son of the living God, I will build my church.

The gates of hell will not prevail against it. Jesus is both our altar of earth and of stone. He is the rock upon which we build. But that building, that foundation is built upon sacrifice.

As he brings the people to the altar, as they come, they hear the word up from the mountain, they draw back and he says, no, the law was not meant to be received without sacrifice. This wasn't for you just to run out and do 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Phew, glad there's not 11. I got through 10. Okay. No, it was to realize you need a place of sacrifice. The law leads to sacrifice. And then amazingly, Jesus continues to build.

[ 48 : 08 ] And he builds with material I wouldn't build with, us. Ephesians chapter 2, we read, now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God and are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone in whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto a holy temple in the Lord in whom you also are built together for habitation of God through the spirit.

That's where we meet with God. We meet with God at the place where he established his presence, the place of sacrifice at the altar. And from that has been birthed the church. And the church is built upon the rock which is Christ and then God says, I will meet with that.

Don't put your hand upon it. Don't you try and fashion and form it. I'll do that. At the altar, Israel had nothing they could offer except an offering. That's all we can bring is this offering.

What do we have to bring? It would pollute it. And as we end with this interesting verse, neither shall you go up by steps unto my altar that your nakedness be not discovered thereon.

God bless you. Have a good week. What does that mean? Well, you know, if you had an altar that was 50 feet in the air, 30 feet in the air so that, you know, you go up to the heights.

[ 49 : 28 ] You're trying to get up into heaven. You think of where they built the Tower of Babel. They said they would like to reach. They wanted to reach the heavens. Literally means to reach into the place of the heavens that they thought we will reach into the place of the gods.

And they all wear robes and if you're walking up the steps and it's a windy day, you know, that's a little awkward. But, self-exaltation exposes shame.

Whenever we bring ourselves, self-exalt ourselves in God's presence, it just exposes shame. Self-promotion will place both man, will place us in an awkward place between both man and God. Whenever we try to promote ourselves, it's just awkward. For us, for man, and for God, it leads to shame. Peter, again, Peter who had many lessons of self-exaltation leading to shame.

Right after he says, you're the Christ, the son of the living God, and he says, that's right, Peter, God's revealed that to you, the Father, and the Son of Man goes to be crucified. And Peter takes him aside and says, no, Lord, not ever.

[ 50 : 34 ] The Father just revealed that to me too. And he said, no, actually, that was Satan. You're of your father, the devil. He said, whoa, what? So Peter had his fair share of self-exaltation and the shame that goes with it.

But much later in life, he would write in 1 Peter 5, all of you be subject to one another, be clothed with humility, covered, the shame, the nakedness, covered.

For God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. humble yourselves, therefore, into the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you. And when God exalts, there's no shame. Amazingly, when I humble myself before God in humility, God can take the most shameful things of my life and use them and exalt them and exalt them to a place where he can use me and the shame's not there.

The awkwardness is gone. Casting all your care upon him for he cares for you. He does. He's not, God doesn't want to expose you. God doesn't want you to be, your shame to be exposed.

Humility at the altar clothes my nakedness and covers my shame. Peter would write in 1 Peter 2 that Jesus, his own self, bear our sins in his own body on the tree.

[ 51 : 48 ] The most shameful, exposed moment in history, Jesus took all of our shame and exposed himself on the tree. That we being dead to sins should live under righteousness.

He took our shame, I get his righteousness. I don't have to go up an altar. Jesus has exalted me to the highest place of the heavens in the throne room of God to live with him by whose stripes we are healed.

He covers and heals our shame. So how do I know if I'm walking by faith or by sight? What am I wearing? What am I clothed with? As I come to the altar, what am I being clothed with?

Revelation 19, verse 7, John is saying, let us rejoice because the marriage supper of the Lamb has come and the bride has made herself ready and to her was granted that she should be arrayed and clothed and fine linen clean and white for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

What am I wearing? Am I walking by faith? Am I clothed in righteousness? And then how am I walking that out? Colossians 3 says that we're to put on therefore, we're to wear this, put it on, be clothed as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies.

[ 53 : 00 ] That just means a very deep mercy. That's our foundation is mercy. Kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another.

If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do you. Man, forgive. I don't need to expose shame. I don't need to embarrass. I don't need to make it awkward. Put it on.

So we are clothed in righteousness. The bride is clothed, not herself. She doesn't clothe herself.

But after being clothed in righteousness, we're told here there's a continual walk that happens.

So as I walk by faith, what am I wearing? Am I putting on humility? Or is it pride? Psalm 73, 6 says the pride he compasses himself about as a chain.

Violence covers him as a garment. What am I wearing? So how do I know if I'm walking by faith or walking by sight? As God's word comes to me, it doesn't come off a mountain.

[ 53 : 54 ] It came from a mountain, Mount Zion, came from the mount of the living God by way of resurrection and the Holy Spirit and the word comes to me. How do I receive it?

How do I respond to it? How do I know if I'm walking by faith or by sight? Am I drawing near or am I standing at a distance? Am I accepting God's word or looking for something comfortable?

Am I responding to what is fearful or what is faithful? Am I seeking peace and blessing apart from sacrifice? Am I clothed in humility? Now, if you don't check off all those, I don't.

At times, I can probably check some of them. But if you don't, the answer is not the law. The answer is not, I'm going to do this. I'm going to try hard.

The ultimate test of faith is not law, but love. But love. You see, the law had led to the altar.

[ 54 : 55 ] The whole point here, the Ten Commandments, it ends with the altar. It led to the altar, but the altar was meant to lead to love. And above all these things, be clothed in love.

How do you know if you're walking by faith? Are you walking in love? Are you clothed with love? Are you pursuing love? The ultimate test of faith, it's simple.

Are you willing to come to the altar? Are you willing to draw near? Or are you pulling away? Are the circumstances of life looking so dark and so bleak and it seems like every time, God, I'm going to spend time with you today, I'm going to press in and it gets worse.

It's harder. It's darker. The law has established priorities. It set our boundaries. It promotes life. It protects love. It keeps God in view.

But it cannot be lived without faith. And faith exists for love.

[ 56 : 03 ] Ephesians 5, 2 says, and walk in love as Christ also has loved us and has given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.

The law brings us to the altar because the law brings us to sin and sin brings us to that altar. But the law brought Jesus to the altar too. But not because of sin, not because of his sin, but my sin.

It brought him to the altar for the purpose of love. You see, we both came to the altar because of sin. I came because of my sin and Jesus came because of my sin. But his sacrifice was accepted. God's blessing is unconditionally to give in to all, but it must be locationally received at the place of sacrifice. It's unconditional to any who would receive it. I can go into the world and say God loves you and his love is free, but it must be locationally received.

You have to receive it at the place of sacrifice. You must. There's no other place. And it's only received by faith and in love.

[ 57 : 12 ] Faith is a substance of things hoped for. It's the evidence of things not seen. We have an evidence. The tomb's empty, guys. Love fulfilled what the law could not.

We can now be clothed in righteousness. We can be clothed in humility. We can be clothed in the love of God. Amazing. Don't draw away just because it looks bleak, dark, sad.

Don't let sin keep you from the altar. That's what the altar's for. It's for sin. As we take communion this morning, so how do I know if I'm walking by faith?

And just come to the altar. That's a big step of faith and it's the best one to take. If you've never come to the altar, if you've never come to a place where by faith you've received the love of God into your life, well, today's the day.

Come to the altar and receive it. If you have, but you're walking by law, by effort, by flesh, man, come to the altar and just by faith receive everything God's given you.

[ 58 : 22 ] I've never seen his face or heard his voice, but by his spirit I have experienced his presence. By his word I know who he is. Faith is enough for me.

It's enough for me in this life no matter how dark it may appear and it's enough for me to step out of this life and into eternity. Lord, Lord, we thank you, Lord.

Oh, Lord, your word is enough, Lord. The evidence of it throughout all of history, Lord. The substance of what it is in our lives when we act upon it in faith. Lord, I've never seen your face.

I've never heard your voice. But it's enough, Lord. Faith is enough for me because the promissory is sure. I know the promise will be sure. And Lord, as we sit here in Exodus and we're sitting here with these children of Israel, Lord, I'm not Moses.

I'm in the crowd, Lord. I'm pulling back. I'm going with everybody else and I'm at a distance and I'm kind of excited and kind of terrified and I don't know about drawing near to God. But then Jesus came.

[ 59 : 33 ] And remarkably, he fulfills the law. He removes the fear and sets aside the, set aside his glory.

Took upon him the form of a man, became obedient as a servant unto death and died the lowest, most shameful, sin-exposing death. And Lord, I just don't have an excuse anymore.

You're so, Lord, accessible. So Lord, by faith, we draw near to you this morning. We draw near because we have nowhere else to go.

As Peter said, where else are we going to go? You have the words of life. But Lord, what we want to do in our lives, day by day, we want to respond to those words by faith. Thank you for the love

that casts out all fear, that brings peace and blessing and purpose and the name and a presence to my life.

Thank you that I can walk by faith, not by sight. In your name I pray. Amen. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

[ 60 : 39 ] The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. God bless you and have a great week.