



SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

THE CONFIDENCE TO FACE THE UNKNOWN

KEY PASSAGE: Hebrews 11:23-29 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Exodus 33:20 | Psalm 16:8 | Matthew 5:8
John 1:1-3, 18 | Romans 15:4 | Colossians 1:15 | 1 Timothy 6:15-16 | James 1:2-4

► SUMMARY

Believers can have confidence to face the future.

This life is full of uncertainty. Nothing is guaranteed—jobs, family, finances, health—and none of these provide lasting refuge. And no one can predict the challenges that will come tomorrow, much less in the years or decades to come. But genuine, unchanging security can be found in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

► SERMON POINTS

Believers today can be encouraged by studying how the Old Testament saints maintained their trust in God. Hebrews 11:27 says of Moses: “By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.” In other words, the prophet set his spiritual gaze on the Lord. In following his example, we should daily view our circumstances in light of our loving Father’s complete sovereignty.

Why should we care what the Old Testament has to say?

When we see how God diligently worked in the lives of believers, we can be encouraged that He will guide and comfort us in similar ways. Romans 15:4 says, “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” As you read the Bible, look for principles that show how God operates in the lives of the faithful. He hasn’t changed. The Father desires to guide you into His

perfect will for your life, the same way He did for the saints of old.

How did Moses survive uncertainty?

Over and over, the prophet walked through adversity with assurance. Consider how he went back to Pharaoh to demand freedom for God’s people, endured the 10 plagues, or coped with the people’s rebellion and idolatry in the desert.

The secret is that Moses “endured, as seeing Him who is unseen” (Heb. 11:27). The word translated endure comes from a root word meaning “strength, courage, or the capacity to bear up under difficult circumstances and not give up in spite of the pressure.” Despite hardship, this leader did the will of the Lord with confidence.

Why does God expect us to have joy in difficulties?

Hardship is the Lord’s tool to develop our spiritual maturity. No suffering is wasted in the life of a believer. James encouraged his readers to “Consider it all joy ... when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2-4). God knows exactly what kind of hardship or trial to bring into our lives to develop our spiritual maturity.

What is the key to our endurance?

Scripture says the reason Moses could endure was because he saw God. How can that be? He certainly

didn't see God the Father who is invisible and "dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16). The Bible says no one has ever seen Him (see Ex. 33:20).

The answer is that Moses saw the Lord through eyes of faith, rather than physical vision. King David also gained spiritual strength by keeping his Creator in mind: "I have set the LORD continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken" (Ps. 16:8). Although they used different terminology, both these leaders made a continual choice to focus on God.

Today we have the benefit of knowing even more of what the Father is like because Jesus revealed Him perfectly (Col. 1:15; see also John 1:1-3, 18). Also, the Holy Spirit lives inside each believer and helps us discern spiritual realities that are not visible to human eyes.

How can we see that which is invisible?

- **Open God's Word and begin to read.** See how He acts in the lives of people like Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, and Paul. Look for biblical principles that depict patterns of how the Lord interacts with believers. He wants to be just as real to you as He was to the biblical saints.
- **Identify the works of God around you.** Once you see the Lord's ways in the Bible, you will start to see His work in your life and in that of your friends and family. This is seeing the manifestation of God. The Holy Spirit dwells within each believer and enables us to be aware of His presence and see Him at work all around us (see Heb. 13:5).
- **Seek a closer walk with God.** What did Jesus mean when He said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8)? This doesn't refer to sinless perfection. Rather, we keep a clear conscience by quickly repenting of sin. When our minds are untainted, we can "see," or experience, the presence of the Lord. Consider this daily habit: Thank God at the end of each day for the ways He worked in your life, and commit to Him your plans for the following day.

What difference will this make in your life?

- **You will view life from a whole different perspective.** Instead of thinking about what you lack, you will focus on our capable, omnipotent God. This leads to thinking more positively, having greater confidence when making decisions, seeing hardships as opportunities to grow, and desiring greater intimacy with God.
- **Obedience becomes more desirable than worldly pleasures.** Consider praying, "God, draw me to Yourself so closely that sin has no appeal to me. Let holiness be the attitude of my heart." You will get excited about God's love and devotion for you and His willingness to show Himself real in your life.
- **You will begin to see things as they really are.** You will have discernment to see through Satan's lies about what truly brings satisfaction. Also, you will have greater discernment in interpersonal relationships.
- **The eternal will gain priority over the temporal.** Things of this life become less important in contrast to those with lasting value. You begin thinking about how best to invest the resources you have—time, money, talents—for God's eternal kingdom.
- **Criticism and misunderstanding no longer affect us the same way.** While never pleasant, judgments no longer powerfully discourage us.

► RESPONSE

- Consider the evidence of God's presence in one or more of the following areas: your relationships, conversation, work, family life, gifts and talents, finances, and influence in the lives of others.
- In what ways are you already looking at your circumstances with Jesus' perspective? How could you take a fresh look at your situation with His viewpoint in mind?

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