

Exodus 6:28-10:29

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Preacher: Calum Jack

[0:00] Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret acts.

Each one of them threw down his staff, and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. Yet Pharaoh's heart became hard, and he would not listen to them, just as the Lord had said.

Then the Lord said to Moses, Pharaoh's heart is unyielding. He refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes out to the river. Confront him on the bank of the Nile, and take in your hand the staff that was changed into a snake.

Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord had commanded. He raised his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his officials, and struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed into blood.

The fish in the Nile died, and the river smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink its water. Blood was everywhere in Egypt. But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret acts, and Pharaoh's heart became hard.

[1:07] He would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said. Then the Lord said to Moses, Go to Pharaoh and say to him, This is what the Lord says. Let my people go, so that they may worship me.

If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs on your whole country. Then the Lord said to Moses, Tell Aaron, stretch out your hand with your staff over the streams and canals and ponds, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land. But the magicians did the same things by their secret arts. They also made frogs come up from the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, Pray to the Lord to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord. After Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh, Moses cried out to the Lord about the frogs he had brought on Pharaoh.

But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart, and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said. Then the Lord said to Moses, Tell Aaron, stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground, and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats.

[2:24] They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came out on people and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats.

The magician said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of God. But Pharaoh's heart was hard, and he would not listen, just as the Lord had said. Then the Lord said to Moses, Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the river, and say to him, This is what the Lord says.

Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses.

The houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies, even the ground will be covered with them. And the Lord did this. Dense swarms of flies poured into Pharaoh's palace and into the houses of his officials.

Throughout Egypt the land was ruined by the flies. Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land. Pharaoh said, I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the Lord your God in the wilderness, but you must not go very far.

[3:36] Now pray for me. But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go. Then the Lord said to Moses, Go to Pharaoh and say to him, This is what the Lord, the

God of the Hebrews says.

Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them back, the hand of the Lord will bring a terrible plague on your livestock in the field, on your horses, donkeys and camels, and on your cattle, sheep and goats.

But the Lord will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and that of Egypt so that no animal belonging to the Israelites will die. The Lord set a time and said, Tomorrow the Lord will do this in the land.

And the next day the Lord did it. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one animal belonging to Israelites died. Pharaoh investigated and found that not even one of the animals of the Israelites had died.

Yet his heart was unyielding and he would not let the people go. Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, Take handfuls of soot from the furnace and have Moses toss it into the air in the presence of Pharaoh.

[4:47] Verse 10, So they took the soot from the furnace and stood before Pharaoh. Moses tossed it into the air and festering boils broke out on people and animals. The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils that were on them and on all the Egyptians.

But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said to Moses. Then the Lord said to Moses, Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews says, Let my people go so that they may worship me.

And down to verse 18, Therefore at this time tomorrow, I will send the worst hail storm that has ever fallen on Egypt from the day it was founded till now.

Give an order now to bring your livestock and everything you have in the fields to a place of shelter because the hail will fall on every person and animal that has not been brought in and is still out in the field and they will die.

Verse 22, Then the Lord said to Moses, Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall over all Egypt, on people and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt.

[5:58] When Moses stretched out his staff towards the sky, the Lord sent thunder and hail and lightning flashed down to the ground. So the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt.

Hail fell and lightning flashed back and forth. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation. Throughout Egypt, hail struck everything in the fields, both people and animals.

It beat down everything growing in the fields and stripped every tree. The only place it did not hail was the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were. Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron.

This time I have sinned, he said to them. The Lord is in the right and I and my people are in the wrong. Pray to the Lord, for we have had enough thunder and hail. I will let you go.

You don't have to stay any longer. Then Moses and Pharaoh went out of the city. He spread out his hands towards the Lord. The thunder and hail stopped and the rain no longer poured down on the land.

[6:58] When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had stopped, he sinned again. He and his officials hardened their hearts. So Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the Lord had said through Moses.

10 verse 3. So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, this is what the Lord, the God of Hebrews says. How long will you refuse to humble yourselves before me?

Let my people go so that they may worship me. If you refuse to let them go, I will bring locusts into your country tomorrow. Verse 12. And the Lord said to Moses, stretch out your hand over Egypt so that locusts swarm over the land and devour everything growing in your fields, everything left by the hail.

Verse 16. Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, I have sinned against the Lord and against you. Now forgive my sin once more and pray to the Lord your God to take the deadly plague away from me.

Moses then left Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord. Verse 20. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not let the Israelites go. Then the Lord said to Moses, stretch out your hand towards the sky so that darkness spreads over Egypt, darkness that can be felt.

[8:12] So Moses stretched out his hand towards the sky and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. Verse 24. Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, go, worship the Lord.

Even your women and children may go with you. Only leave your flocks and herds behind. Verse 27. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart and he was not willing to let them go.

Pharaoh said to Moses, get out of my sight. Make sure you do not appear before me again. The day you see my face, you will die. Just as you say, Moses replied, I will never appear before you again. There's so much in these chapters and I'm ready just listening to, you know, the reading thing, could have talked about that. Yep, could have talked about that. And anyway, so two weeks ago, we looked at chapter four under the title, Moses, the reluctant messenger.

Last week, at chapters five and six in the revealed mighty hand of God. And here in chapter seven to 11, we're looking at the plagues and the resolute heart of Pharaoh.

[9:14] I wonder if a helpful approach this morning is to do almost what some of these action movies do. You know, they kind of start at the end of the story and then kind of go six months earlier and kind of re-chart what happened, how it ended up.

Because at the end of it all, you know, Pharaoh, this leader of the superpower of the age, the great and mighty Egyptian empire that we're still talking about, that produced so much that we still marvel at 3,000 years later.

The great leader, one who was worshipped as divine. Here we see him at the end of these, that verse that Ryan read for us, not standing as he stood at the beginning in all this splendor.

Chapter five of his royal court, regal, proud, defiant, revered, in his mind, blessed, protected by the many gods of the nations that they worshipped that were pleased to exalt him and his nation, saying, chapter five, verse two, who is the Lord?

Who is Yahweh? Who is the great I am? You're unknown God that I should obey him and let Israel go. I do not know him and I will not let you go. It's a very different Pharaoh that we're seeing at the end of the chapters that are read today, isn't it?

[10:31] And it's not that he was atheistic. Of course, we know that he believed in spiritual things. He believed in the many gods of the age. His culture was less akin to ours, maybe more akin to Indian culture as today, with many gods that they worship as a nation.

But it's interesting that Pharaoh will worship at the foot of other gods but any god other than the one true and living God.

Any god other than the one true and living God. It's interesting, isn't it? And we maybe have found where in the past we were in a similar boat. We would have worshipped nothing or anything other than the one true and living God, the God of the Bible.

Anything other than believing in Jesus. We know others who are in that boat and it's hard for us. It's heartbreaking. Friends and family members in that position believing anything.

Worshipping at the foot of idols, not maybe so much of wood and stone but the idols of their heart. Success or the philosophy of the age or anything but Jesus. Refusing to let him be, if you like, the north star by which the whole of their lives are guided.

[11:48] The true north by which they determine and understand all things. They will look to any other star in the sky if you like other than that one true star, Jesus Christ, to lead them and guide them.

Pharaoh likewise refuses to look to the Lord, to Yahweh, the God of gods, the grey I am. And as a result we see a huge contrast to how it was at the beginning.

That hubris and pride were placed with a kind of madness. Chortling advisors silenced. The carcasses of the gods lying dead strewn at their feet and around the throne.

A great but unjust nation humbled. It's a dramatic picture that we see. So let's rewind and see how we get there and what we can learn from it.

We're going to hang these passages on four hooks of four hearts. Moses' hearts, briefly God's hearts, Pharaoh's heart and our hearts.

[12:58] So firstly, Moses, briefly, what we're seeing in Moses is a heart transformation, isn't it? By the one true and living God, by a living and vivid encounter and relationship with the Lord as he hears his word, as he responds to that word.

His heart is learning to trust and to yield, to love and obey him, isn't it? We see him time and again through these chapters.

God says it and he just goes and does it. A far cry from the Moses that we met at the burning bush, just unsure of all things.

We're seeing the kingdom of God worked in and around and through him, learning to walk more and more by faith, taking God at his word in contrast with Pharaoh and some of the advisors resisting the word of God.

Moses is resting on it, trusting in it and obeying it, even in the face of hardship as Pharaoh resists it. I wonder what God is doing in our hearts.

[14:11] Is it a day of a renewing of our faith as we're looking at these passages together and other parts of scripture? Maybe our hearts in the past have taken a bit of, in recent days have taken a bit of a hammering, swamped by life, duped by the devil's lies and by sin and now we sense the Holy Spirit just tugging at our hearts.

Come, come, learn afresh to abide, to trust, to obey, to have your joy rekindled.

See more of me in your life and enjoy more of that. peace. So we see something of that work in Moses' heart but secondly, and you might be thinking secondly already, fantastic, we'll be out if you're early, apologies, that's a really short point.

Secondly though, I think we see something of God's hearts. Of course there are a number of questions that we'll have raised in our community groups and I hope you get a chance to really discuss them but as we look at God's heart we might sort of have looked at these passages in community group and refresh this morning and say what is the Lord's purpose, what is the Lord's heart in all of these things?

Couldn't he have just delivered his people without all the kind of palava? Well actually the Lord answers that very question, that very point in chapter 9 verse 13 through to 16.

[15:38] Then the Lord said to Moses get up early in the morning confront Pharaoh say to him this is what the Lord the God of the Hebrews says let my people go so that they may worship me or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth for by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that you would have wiped you off the face of the earth I could have done it in a oner but I've raised you up for this very purpose that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed right across the earth in all the earth in other words what is God's heart in this is that people may know him people may know his redeeming power may know his great love and mercy and kindness and goodness might know his protection might know his help might know his strengthening that the people themselves in Egypt that Pharaoh even might know him we think of you know

Paul in Athens looked around at all the gods in Athens that they worshipped he saw an altar to an unknown god and he said here's the God I'm going to declare to you you don't know him let me tell you about him God himself is doing that in these passages not just Egypt but all the nations that he is unique verse 14 there is no one like me I have a much better story for your lives than the gods that you worship and serve and slave yourselves to so what is the Lord's heart that we might know him the great I am the God of gods not the gods of the nation of demonic deceptions but the true one true and living God the Lord of Lords the King of Kings who is trustworthy and faithful who is just and compassionate who can be a rock under our feet a shield behind whom we can shelter in times of trouble a shepherd to lead us whose presence provides what we need at the time that we need it when we yield our lives to him and look to him and so it's interesting that that kind of witness begins right where at the very beginning with the issue of the snakes in chapter 9 verse 12 of the snake that comes from

Moses staff consuming eating the snakes plural of the wise men the sorcerers and the magicians who replicate the act it's a prophetic act of what is to come that these things are nothing at all compared to the one true and living gods that snake was deeply symbolic for the Egyptians the sun god Ra who created all things took the form of a snake you see it in Tutankhamun's tomb the snake there it's a bold declaration they are right in the court of Egypt there is no god other than the one true and living god not many gods who are authors and sustainers of life often cruel who demand great sacrifice to be appeased but there is one who alone as was sung this morning who is worthy of our praise worthy of our souls our lives are all and again if you're kind of new to this if you're just looking into

Christianity and you've been coming along for the first time to church you're kind of maybe sort of looking at and thinking why did he pick those different types of plagues that may look somewhat

random and there are many reasons why it looks that he's chosen not least that each of the plagues are linked to the gods of the nations and in numbers actually picks up on that that at that time God was judging the gods of the nations so you have gods over the seas and the waters happy was the not happy h-a-p-i not p-p-y the fertility god was associated with the Nile so the first plague in a sense dethrones her Hecate had the head of a frog and of course the frogs are subject to not Hecate but the Lord there's a land and that's linked to the earth and Geb one of the Egyptian gods was linked with the earth Wajet was another god he was symbolised by an insect there were the bulls that symbolised gods

Hathor and Apis there was things associated gods associated with sickness the boils Sekhmet was the god of healing of illness there's things associated with gods of the elements Hale Hut or Nut was the god of the sky Osiris the fertility god and so on and then there was the gods linked with the cosmos Ra the sun god reputed to be creator of all life king of the Egyptian gods and so each of these plagues dethrones the gods of Egypt and says no they are nothing at all there is only one true and living god who is creator of all sustainer of all judge of all and of course later on in the story as we go through the scriptures there was one to come and testify again that there is only one true and living god who is author of life and over life who demonstrated his authority over the winds and the water over sickness over the cosmic and demonic forces peace in the storm wine from the waters not parting the waters but walking on them deliverance from sickness and death and the dominion of the demonic the power that we see at work in these judgments in these passages was the same power that was the work at the time of Jesus

[21 : 58] Christ when he came to save you and I and notice these plays come in sets of three and follow a sort of repeated pattern of three threes the first in each of the threes is set in the morning the second takes place over two days the third comes without prior warning and that's repeated three times some in trying to understand the nature of them have planned for a purely naturalistic cause and explanation of course God works through cause and effect but when you look at the sort of you know and they think you know if you sort of because of the polluting of the Nile the frogs leap out the frogs die the flies come and so on and text doesn't necessarily deny that but there's something else there's a sovereign God who's in control of all these things that even Pharaoh is given the option to kind of determine when some of the plagues would end because God is the one who is in charge not simply not purely naturalistic there's a supernatural thing going on here and of course it will not be the first time

God will declare his sovereignty at the heart of the great empires of the earth Hezekiah was delivered from the mighty Assyrian empire that dominated at that time as they stood waiting at the gate of Jerusalem to conquer the city but the city in Hezekiah delivered by the hand of God Daniel witnessed to the Lord in the courts of the mighty Babylonian empire I think then there is an implicit call in all of this from the Lord isn't there an implicit call as he witnesses to himself in these circumstances it is come will you come and find life in the only one who gives life and maybe you've come along this morning as I've mentioned and you're searching you're thinking there must be more to life than this and actually beginning to realize that it is the

Lord that has been missing in your life you felt the tug the call of his Holy Spirit drawing you well maybe today is the day to yield to him and let him be saviour and Lord of your life and if you're doing that in your heart right now please come and speak to me after the service I'd love to encourage you in that I've got some resources for you but in chapter 8 verse 23 and in other places God makes a distinction doesn't he from the land of Goshen where his people were dwelling and again that's a witness isn't it that God has bound himself in covenant love and promise to his people and is pleased to be their God and pleased that he is their people I don't know do you need to be reminded this morning that he is pleased that we are his people that he is pleased to be your God and you to be his do you know the Lord's delight in you through the power of the cross he's not sure delighted with everything that we do but a fundamental nature he has accepted us he has adopted us as his own as a definite decision of his heart before creation began he determined he mentioned your name and that you would be his and made a way that that might be so he has adopted us as his own and grafted us that we might abide in him that truth we need to let it shape and reshape our view of our relationship with him why we love and live for him you know one of the things I've been doing of late is singing some of the oldies that I learned when I first became a Christian back in the 80s you know there's an old song that it was new then but old now it said

I'm accepted I'm forgiven I'm fathered by the true and living God and so it goes on just reminding my heart of the glorious and wonderful truth that he has adopted me as his own he has made a way that I might be saved he has made a way that I might be his reminding my heart of the glorious truths of the doctrine of adoption you see in Romans chapter 8 and by the third plague the people around Pharaoh are beginning to see what is going on you saw folks we missed one of the verses that said even the people of Egypt when they get hail storm those who feared the Lord hid their animals under the shelter even the magicians chapter 8 verse 19 are saying this is the finger we can't do this the wisdom the worldly wisdom of the wise is confided and they confess this is the finger of

God and then 10 verse 7 again Pharaoh's officials said to him how long will this man be a snare to let the people go so that they may worship the Lord their God you realize Egypt is ruined but it's interesting that what the Lord said and his purpose in these things became true because he is true to his word he's the one who knows the end from the beginning and the beginning from the end and so remember that what Rahab said when the spies visited Jericho years later she said we have heard of the God who parted the seas we heard of the events of this moment it was as he said it would be a witness to the nations Joshua chapter 2 verse 10 now these are special acts or revelations accompanied by the general revelation or witness of creation that we've been singing about itself that declares day after day the glory of

[28:31] God that tells of the God who is mighty whose arm is strong to smite after 400 years of oppression and slavery and the infanticide of Jewish boys they are receiving the just judgment for their cruelty his hand is strong to smite but also strong to save Jeremiah reminds us that God is a reluctant judge he takes no delight in judgment but because he is just he must do it Luther and Calvin called judgment the work of his left hand and salvation the work of his right apologies to anyone who's left handed but what is his purpose his purpose then is in part a witness to the nations that they may know and be delivered from the deadly superstitions and demigods in their lives and in their nations to the one true life giver pointing forward again to the day when he came amongst us and said

I am the bread of life in me is life life to the full come and receive it come and find it come and know it so we briefly saw something of Moses changing heart we've seen something of God's heart for the nations but also that he is a just judge but also I think we see something deeply disturbing in Pharaoh's heart and we need to look but it's repeated time and again isn't it this interplay between what is going on in Pharaoh's heart and it's him hardening his own heart the hardness of his heart and ultimately the Lord confirming what is in his heart the Lord hardens his heart and I'm sure it's a community group we spent time trying to figure that out and parse it out I don't want to go into too much depth and we've explored the notions before and I think it's just helpful to pause and to think about this a wider dynamic that I think goes on in the Christian life and understanding our relationship with the Lord and our walk before him because God is sovereign he knows all things he is over all things so how do we make sense of our lives and our human responsibility why do we pray if he already knows what we're going to pray and so on we might have all of these questions and so it's helpful to understand the dynamic between God's sovereignty and human responsibility of God hardening our own hearts and I think what we see in the scriptures is that the Bible holds these two things in dynamic tension

God's sovereignty and human responsibility we see that stated in other places side by side in the scriptures Jesus Jesus for example John chapter 6 verse 37 says all that the father gives to me will come to me that's God's sovereignty all that the father gives to me will come to me and then he says and whoever comes to me I will never drive away that's human responsibility our responsibility to come to him and Jesus has no problem holding them side by side the workings of the heart of the father and the workings of the heart of the seeker are there side by side held in dynamic tension Jim Packer great theologians called this an antinomy where two seemingly irreconcilable truths are held together where in our minds we might not be able to fully square them off and reconcile them but they are fully reconciled in the heart and the mind of God so in salvation did God choose you yes he did before the creation of the world did you choose him yes you did was Pharaoh's heart did he harden his own heart yes he did did God confirm that in his heart did God harden his heart yes he did both things are true and we hold them in dynamic tension but there's another thing that's going on here which I think is equally significant and it is this that there is a kind of madness that Pharaoh's sin creates in his heart and in his mind we saw him defiant last week who is the

Lord that I should obey him this week chapter 7 verse 15 his heart is unyielding to the witness that is before him as the magician chapter 8 verse 18 this is the finger of God he's not listening and then in this back and forth thing oh I'll let the people go and pray for me and he gets relief and then changes his mind chapter 8 verse 8 chapter 9 verse 27 he acknowledges his sin but it looks like they're just crocodile tears sorry for the situation not sorry for the sin Paul defines that as a worldly sorrow 2 Corinthians 7 10 godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret worldly sorrow brings death sorry for the situation not sorry for the sin sorry that they got caught not sorry that there was an opportunity to get right with God and change and by verse 35 we see there's no ongoing fruit to the root of his repentance and by chapter 10 verse 20 he's driving Moses and Aaron out of his sight and by 10 16 we see him again calling them back declaring his sin asking for getting and so the thing is until finally chapter 10 verse 27 Moses is banished and ultimately God is banished because as God said to Moses I will be as God to him through you and Aaron will be your prophet and so as he banishes Moses he banishes God and the voice of God and the word of God and the offer of God his heart has just become set hard like concrete and Pharaoh then stands as a working example of the power and the dynamics of sin I've been reading a really helpful book Do You Believe by Paul Tripp it's a systematic theology but it's brilliant because it's 30% the doctrine 70% application of the doctrine and it is wonderfully rich and it was really interesting just as he was speaking about the doctrine of scripture he was talking about how the word is essential for casting light in our lives to keep us on those paths of righteousness to keep our hearts tender to the Lord not being hardened not becoming like concrete and it's one of those books where I was highlighting

[35 : 30] I hadn't highlighted a book for absolutely ages this is fantastic and I was sharing it with other people and I was that's great come and so I'm going to quote extensively from it and riff on it and so on so all credit to Paul Tripp for most of the next part of the sermon where we address not just Pharaoh's heart but our hearts as well Paul Tripp wrote 2nd Corinthians 5:15 contains a tiny phrase that is not only expansive in its implications but also points us to one of the most important functions of the word of God in our lives the verses and he died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves that those who live might no longer live for themselves in other words Paul is saying here that the DNA of sin is selfishness and we see that in the example of Pharaoh sin puts us at the center of our world and makes life all about us sin is about self-focus and self-glory it is motivated by what we want when we want it and how we want it sin turns every human being into a glory thief taking for ourselves what belongs to God alone sin is self-congratulatory and self-aggrandizing sin causes us to think that we are righteous wise and strong actually when we're not sin makes us rebels wanting to submit to no one's law but our own sin causes us to write our stories with us at the center stage commanding the attention and credit that we think we deserve but one of the most important things

God's word does is to confront us with another story and in this story we are not at the center stage we're seeing that in the life in this story in Exodus who is the hero of this story who is the great figure the great pharaoh no the great God in this story in the scripture story we are given life and breath to serve the purposes of another for the sake of the glory of another and this story reminds us again and again that self glory is the ultimate human dysfunction and is always self destructive and again we see that in the life of pharaoh don't we in the progression in his life he's no longer willing to hear the wisdom of the wise the counsel even of his own courts let alone the word of God sin brings a darkness to our soul a searing to our conscience a wrong ordering of our priorities it distorts and deceives our discernment and clouds our clarity doesn't it and that deception trickles out into the everyday self glory and its hardening effects on our hearts as we seen in the life of pharaoh will make you and

I in the ordinary things of life easily irritated critical judgmental in our parenting for example and with others self glory will turn a marriage into a war of who gets what they want first self glory and sin will make you an exhausting entitled friend self glory will keep you from being satisfied and make you and make it more natural for you to complain rather than be thankful self glory will make you more known for your demands and your self service self glory will cause you again and again to take credit for what you could never have earned or produced on your own self glory will make you threatened by and envious of the success of others self glory will turn you into a church consumer instead of a committed participant I'm quoting trip here just in case you're thinking self glory deceives us distracts us and entraps us and it can ultimately destroy us self glory leaves behind a

mountain of broken people and things it never produces good fruit and though we are freed from sin's power and penalty its presence still resides around us isn't it and where we let it have sway it has this hardening effect on our hearts so that we're tempted to move towards danger rather than away from it we will be deceived into thinking sin is not really that sinful or that dangerous to us and here's the thing the reason that sin is able to lure seduce and entrap us is because it is so good at presenting itself to be beautiful and harmless when it is neither presenting itself to be a better story when it is not good news but bad news when a man is lusting after a woman or vice versa he isn't overcome with a sense of danger no what he sees!

is beauty and what he experiences is pleasure if you're gossiping about someone on your phone you aren't feeling fear of the danger of what you are doing but rather the scintillating thrill of carrying a story about someone to someone else if you're committing the sin of gluttony you are so busy enjoying the pleasures of what you are consuming that you have little spiritual awareness of the danger of what you're doing we need the rescuing function of the word of God not only because sin is dangerous but also because it masquerades as anything but dangerous one of the devastating results of sin as we see in the!

Pharaoh is it a fool the truth and sees falsehood a fool looks at bad and sees good a fool ignores God and inserts himself into God's position a fool rebels against God's wise and loving law and writes his own moral code a fool thinks he can live independently of help a fool will not think as he was designed to think desire what he was created to desire or do what he is called to do but here is deadly about this a fool doesn't know that he is a fool Pharaoh was such a fool but he did not know it even when he was confronted with it his heart was like concrete he would not receive it but here is the truth I am a fool but gloriously have been rescued by the wisdom and power of

[42:33] God and whilst now I'm delivered from sin's power and penalty I still live in its presence and dangers but wisdom is available to me the power of God is available to me and to you and to I to help us to navigate the world that we live in that is why we let the word shed its light so brightly that is why we cling to Christ as our power and our wisdom as the one in whom we trust as the bright and shining star over our lives our true north that is why we trust God's heart and not our own his heart is a heart to save his heart has a higher and nobler purposes for us than our hearts could ever conceive that is why our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness on which we now stand today now and as we look out into the week his glory not mine and as we do that we will find that we are most satisfied in him when he is most glorified in us to quote

John Piper that is why on a morning that this morning we look at our hearts afresh we maybe cry out to the Lord breathe on the breath of God fill me with life in you Lord let me dwell in you let me abide in you let me know the freedom for which you have set me free let me know the places that I am in danger let me see my sin and let me be convinced by your better story for my life let love and joy and peace and patience and goodness and kindness and gentleness and self control be the things that I'm longing for as your Holy Spirit works in my heart it's why in a morning when we look at the life of Pharaoh when we see his heart and we see Moses heart and we see God's heart we look at our own heart and cry

Lord more of you more of you in my life Amen Let's affirm that in our final song as we sing our hope is built on nothing less I dare not trust the sweetest frame but only trust in Jesus name