

Series: The Life of Moses

“When Leadership Leads”

C.R. 10-1-17

**Text:** Exodus 32: 15-35

**Intro:** A couple of weeks ago we looked at the times when leaders lose it. Last week we looked at the times when leaders pray. Today we will look at the times when leaders must lead. When they are called on to make very difficult decisions for the sake of all the people. Moses can truly be described as a great leader. Not a perfect leader but a great leader.

First, we see that in spiritual leadership

**1) Sin Must be Addressed. (v. 20 and verse 30)**

- a. Should be noted that Moses and God responded to the sin of Israel with the same emotion. Their anger waxed hot.
- b. This is truly a case of righteous anger. God did not scold Moses for his anger.
- c. In his anger, he took action. He broke the tablets.
- d. In his anger Moses did not sin, but he did take decisive action. The first thing he did was to dash the tablets to the ground. If he had done this in a fit of rage, it would have been a sin. But Moses broke the tablets as a prophetic act. The Old Testament prophets often did things in public that symbolized Israel’s relationship to God. (Ryken)
- e. Deu 9:17 And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.
- f. Moses was illustrating to the people that you broke the laws of God.
- g. Most importantly Moses took the idol and smashed it to pieces. He completely and thoroughly took care of it.
- h. Moses would then make the people taste the bitterness of their idolatry.
- i. Idols are not to be tolerated. Not then, and certainly not now.
- j. We must do this with our own idolatries.
- k. **An idol is anything which displaces God in my heart.**
- l. **A. W. Pink said “Anyone or anything which comes into competition with the Lord’s ruling me in a practical way, is an “idol.”**
- m. We must see here that the only way to deal with an idol is not to put it in the closet but to put it in the trash.
- n. Moses leadership is saying to the people you better not dabble with idols you must destroy them.

Not only do we see that Sin must be addressed, but Secondly, we see that...

## 2) Responsibility Must Be Taken (v. 21-24)

- a. We have to take responsibility for what we have done.
- b. The fact is that no matter what the people had said or done Aaron had no excuse.
- c. The blame game is not a new game. It is as old as the garden itself.
- d. It is the spiritual leader's responsibility to keep the people away from sin.
- e. Note how Aaron blamed the people.
- f. Like Aaron we often turn on the one who is confronting us with our sin.
- g. Like Aaron we often try to blame someone else.
- h. My husband doesn't care, my wife wasn't meeting my needs, my boss is an idiot, etc...
- i. Aaron needed to take the blame here. What he was saying may have been true, but he was the leader.
- j. Aaron never admits that he had done wrong.
- k. **Note Verse 24.** We call this "SPIN", the Bible calls it Lying.
- l. Downplaying our Depravity might be better terminology.
- m. God made it very clear that Aaron was lying. Look back at **verse 4**.
- n. **We see beautiful pictures in scripture of people taking responsibility. David in Psalm 51, The prodigal son when he said "Father I have sinned against heaven and before you" (Luke 15:21) . The tax collector in Luke 18:13 "God be merciful to me a sinner"**
- o. The true path to salvation is when you own up to your sin.

Not only have we seen that Sin Must Be Addressed, and that Responsibility Must Be Taken, but Thirdly we see....

## 3) A Choice Must Be Made (v. 26)

- a. Who is on the Lord's Side? Who wants to do things God's way?
- b. The world gets very confused about what it means to be a Christian when they constantly see the church riding the fence.
- c. Moses needs to see where the true church is here if you will.
- d. Moses has no idea how far the corruption has spread so he makes an appeal to the people and gives them a chance to choose.
- e. The only ones who said they were on the Lord's side were the Levites.
- f. **To do this, the Levites had to leave the camp of sin. If they had stayed where they were, they would have remained under God's judgment. Simply living with the people of God was not enough to save them. They had to make a personal commitment to serve the living God. (Phillip Ryken)**
- g. Jesus said "Whoever is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:30) If we do not decide for Christ, then we are siding against him.
- h. When we decide for Him we leave behind our sin and we rally to Jesus.
- i. **This is the decision we make when we first come to Christ. It is also a decision we make every day as we live the Christian life. Who is on the Lord's side? Are you with God or not? Are you for him or against him? With every thought we think, every word we speak, and every action we take, we are making our stand. If we do not speak the truth,**

we are false. If we do not preserve our purity, we are unholy. If we do not promote justice, we are unrighteous. If we do not make sacrifices for others, we are selfish. If we do not walk in humility, we are proud. There is no spiritual neutrality. We must take sides. Every day we are taking a stand, either with God or against him.

- j. Ryken, Philip Graham. Exodus (ESV Edition): Saved for God's Glory (Preaching the Word) (p. 955). Crossway. Kindle Edition.