

# Moses: God's Way of Training a Man (Part 1)

by Joseph Carroll

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*Joseph Carroll explores how Moses' life exemplifies God's training through faith, humility, and the choice to suffer for eternal glory.*

**Duration:** 39:03

**Scripture:** Exodus 14:10

**Topics:** "Moses", "Surrender to God", "Faith"

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## Description

Joseph Carroll preaches on Moses' journey of faith, emphasizing how he transitioned from a man driven by emotions to one who learned to trust in God's promises. The sermon highlights the Israelites' fear as they faced the Egyptians, and how Moses, despite his past mistakes, was called by God to lead them through the Red Sea. Carroll illustrates that true faith operates in the sphere of Christ, and that believers must learn to act by faith rather than by feelings. He stresses the importance of surrendering to God and dealing with personal defilement to hear His voice and fulfill His will. Ultimately, the message encourages Christians to live victoriously through faith, as exemplified by Moses' transformation.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn together in the word of God to Exodus chapter 14. Exodus chapter 14, reading from verse 10 to verse 16, and from verse 21 to verse 31. Exodus 14, verse 10.

And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them, and they were sore afraid. And the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord. And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? There is no need for me to emphasize the fact that they are emotionally oriented at this point.

Their emotions have taken control. They've forgotten completely about all the miracles that had happened before, and the faithfulness of God. And now they're crying out, not to the Lord, in his faithfulness, to once again prove his ability to deliver, but, Why have you done this to me? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? It's always the word that comes from the professing Christian who's still in the world.

Don't bother us. Let us alone. Don't lead us out in a path of faith too dangerous.

Why don't you leave us alone? We're happy here in the world. Yes, you're happy there under the devil on your way to hell. Let us alone.

Don't bother us. If you want to live that life, go and live it. But don't bother us.

It's still the same today. It's one thing to be called an Israelite, another thing to be a true Israelite. One thing to be called a Christian, another thing to prove it by your life.

Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt? In Egypt, what have they been doing? Complaining. Let us alone. Don't bother us.

That we may serve the Egyptians. Yes, that we may serve the devil's people. Let us alone.

Devil's people will look after you. They'll feed you and they'll clothe you and they'll entertain you with bread and circuses. And they'll also lead you into hell.

Would it have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness? Strange that people don't realize they're going to die someday. It's not dying that's the issue, it's where you're going when you die. I might have smiled when we came to the end of that last line in the last stanza.

The amazing number of hymn writers always finish with death. You're rolling through the rivers or you're passing cold through the portals of death or something or other. Well, Jesus is coming.

Why not consider his coming? If he doesn't come, praise God, death is the gateway to glory. So what's the panic about? Well, they're panicking here all right. But I want you to notice what Moses said.

Moses said unto the people, fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Which he will show to you today. For the Egyptians whom you have seen today you shall see them again no more forever.

How could he say that? Because God is going to fulfill his promise to Moses. That's why. But Moses was not always the man we see here.

As we shall consider together this evening. It was much that took place in his life. Before he could say to this people, don't be afraid, stand still.

In other words, calm your emotions. Fear is a very powerful emotion. Usually the first weapon that the enemy will use in life is a weapon of fear.

Make you afraid. The Christian who walks with the Lord knows nothing of fear. Except if fear is God.

That is to reverence his God. God has not given us a spirit of fear. The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace.

And the Lord said unto Moses, wherefore cries thou unto me, speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward. But lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

Verse 21. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night.

And made the sea dry land. And the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.

And the waters were a wall under them on their right hand and on their left. So we see not only the miracle of the dividing of the sea but of the dry land. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them in the midst of the sea.

Even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horsemen. It came to pass that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud and troubled the host of the Egyptians. And took off their chariot wheels that they drove them heavily.

So that the Egyptians said let us flee from the face of Israel for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians. They knew the Lord. They knew this Lord.

They knew this God of useful lights. They'd seen him work before. They'd seen him perform miracles.

And they knew exactly what was happening but it was too late. It was too late. And the Lord said unto Moses stretch out thine hand over the sea.

That the waters may come again upon the Egyptians. Upon their chariots. And upon their horsemen.

And that's quite something for God to ask a man to do. He's asking Moses to put to death those Egyptians. It's quite something.

So you stretch out your rod and see what's going to happen. The waters will come on the Egyptians. Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea.

He didn't argue. He didn't ask the Lord was there not some other way. He simply did what he was told.

Stretched forth his hand over the sea. And the sea returned to his strength. When the morning appeared.

And the Egyptians fled against it. And the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots.

And the horsemen. And all the host of Pharaoh. That came into the sea after them.

There remainedeth not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land. In the midst of the sea.

And the waters were all under them on their right hand. And on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day.

Out of the hand of the Egyptians. And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. And Israel saw that great work.

Which the Lord did upon the Egyptians. And the people feared the Lord. And believed the Lord.

And his servant Moses. This evening I want to give you two key statements. If you have a pencil I'd like you to take them down.

And I think you would be wise to memorize them. The first is this. That Jesus Christ is the sphere of the Christian's life.

In other words. The Christian lives in a sphere. And that sphere is Christ.

Christ is his life. Christ is his life. As we've seen already this evening.

In the singing of the great hymn. And also in Mr. Johnson's prayer. The spirit of God is saying something to us.

That Christ is our life. Therefore Christ is the sphere in which the Christian lives. Christ is his life.

That's the first thing. The apostle said. When Christ who is our life shall appear.

Then shall you also appear with him in glory. The important word he's saying for us this evening is this. That Christ is our life.

Then the second important statement is this. That faith is the element in which the Christian operates freely. Faith is the element in which the Christian operates freely.

In freedom. So that we have faith. We have Christ as the sphere of our life.

For he is our life. In that sphere we are to operate. How are we to operate? We are to operate by faith.

Faith is the element. It's an element. That enables the Christian to operate freely within the sphere of Christ who is his life.

Everything else is dependent upon our understanding those two things. If we are to live victoriously. Because we will realize our one source and how all that is true for us in Christ can be made real in us.

By faith. That's what Christianity is all about. It's all about a person.

And that person being my life and that life being manifest in me and through me by faith. Always by faith by no other way. As we shall see I trust this evening.

Fishermen know that if you take a fish out of the water and you put him on the bank he'll twitch and he'll squirm and he'll jump. Why? He's out of his element. He's been created to function freely in water.

But you take him out of his element and immediately his twitching is in pain, he's in agony, he can't function. He isn't built to function in the air. He's built to function in the water.

That's his element. His element is water. You take a bird, the element of the bird is air.

Put a bird in the water it's going to be in trouble. Now the element in which the Christian operates freely and restfully is faith. You take him out of that he begins to twitch and squirm and get into pain and get into trouble.

Now this is God's way. God doesn't have any other way. It's right from the beginning to the end.

This is God's way. The beginning of the scripture is right to the end. God's way is faith.

You're saved by faith. Sanctified by faith. Walked by faith.

Lived by faith. It's faith from beginning to end. So faith is the element in which the believer operates restfully and triumphantly.

You take that fish, here he is twitching, squirming and some fish will give a little squeak and a croak. And you put him back in the water, what do you do? He twitches his tail, he's off. Perfectly at ease now, before he's gasping and groaning about to die.

Do you live by faith? Do you live by faith in the son of God? That's the big question. Or do you live by feeling? We're going to consider a man tonight who, through very painful experience, learned the folly of being controlled by his emotions. And directed by his emotions.

He had to learn to live in his will and to walk according to the will of God for him by faith. He had to learn it, we all have to learn it. And the man that I'm considering this evening is of course Moses.

And we're going to have a little look at Moses because he's one of the great leaders and one of the great characters of scripture. But how did he learn not to live in his emotions? Well he learned it the hard way. And that's invariably how we learn anything and how anything truly becomes part of us.

We have to learn it the hard way. First of all, we find that Moses in Hebrews 11 was a man who made a tremendous decision. It was a decision that cost him everything that men in the world would hold dear.

He surrendered completely and utterly to God and to what he thought was God's purpose for his life. We read in Hebrews 11 by faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Moses as we know was rescued.

He was raised in the royal household. And then there came a time when he had to make a decision. He could choose to be adopted fully into the royal family.

He could make that choice, be a prince of the royal family. If he did not choose to be a prince, he would have to identify himself with the Israelites because that's what he was. He had to make a choice.

So he chose not to be a prince, he chose to be identified with a downtrodden race of slaves. Quite a choice. Pharaoh had no heir and it's quite possible, almost certain according to the historians, that he could have sat upon the throne of Egypt.

Now why did he make that choice? Because he had eternity in view. He made that choice with eternity in view. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. This is what we read about him. So he made the choice, he made the choice with eternity in view.

That's a wise choice. How long do we have here? Three score year and ten more or less? We don't know. But it comes to an end if Jesus doesn't come.

What about eternity? Moses made the choice with eternity in view. So he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God now, rather to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. And the pleasures of sin he could have enjoyed in Egypt, Egypt had a very advanced culture.

Quite a choice. What was he choosing? If he chose suffering now he would experience glory forever. That's quite a good choice.

The scripture always or invariably identifies suffering and glory together. He chose suffering, he chose affliction, he chose identification with the down-trodden race. Why? Because he knew that if he suffered in the will of God then he would share glory throughout all eternity.

Paul says, if so be that we suffer with him, that is the Lord, that we may be also glorified together. No suffering, no glory. If the life is lived for this world, then there is no fruit.

And if the life is lived for this world, and the love of the things of this world, there is no salvation. For if any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. So we find here this tremendous test, and Moses passes the test triumphantly and gloriously.

He said, no, I'm not going to be a prince in the royal household, I'm going to identify myself with my people. His people were down-trodden, and when Moses looked out upon those people, he saw their suffering and he was deeply disturbed by it. There are a few other things we learn about Moses in Acts 7, verse 22.

We read, Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. No ordinary man. He was a man of great learning, a man of great intellect, but he was also a wise man.

You can have men with learning, they're not very wise. But he had both learning and wisdom, and he was also a very courageous man. He was mighty in deeds indeed.

Some historians tell us he was the general over all the Egyptian armies. Quite a man. Learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, brilliant, intellectual, an orator, mighty in words, mighty in deeds.

Just the man God can use. He's just the man, invariably, God will not use. Just the man God will not use.

He's too big. He's just too big. God's going to have to cut him down.

He's got too much. We say, oh, this young fellow, he's got a brilliant mind, he's very gifted, he can do anything, lovely, sparkling personality. If only he would decide for the Lord what he could do for the Lord.

That's a bunch of nonsense. Only God can do the work of God. Men cannot do God's work.

What must we do to work the works of God, said the disciples of the Lord? He said, well, you can't. What do you mean? It's the work of God that you should believe on him. That's his work, believe on him.

It's always been his work. Believe on him. He does the work.

So we say, Moses, mighty in words, mighty in deeds, courageous, brilliant. My, God's going to use him. He's got to do something with him before he uses him.

The more powerful a man is, the more God has to work in him to bring him down. What about the Apostle Paul? What a powerful man. And what a thorn he had all his days.

Because what was the lesson he had to learn? That God's strength is made perfect in weakness. That's the lesson he had to learn. God's strength is made perfect in weakness.

God's strength is only manifest through a weak man. If a man is too strong, he doesn't need God's strength. That's one of the tragedies of our times.

What do schools do? I'll tell you what they do. When a young fellow graduates, you know, they say to him, very big, Now you are ready to lead! And he goes out thinking he's a leader. It's funny, they would say, Now you are beginning to learn how to serve.

How to serve. He that is greatest among you, let him be servant of all. Don't we read the scriptures? You don't train leaders, you train servants.

Servants. What was our Lord? He was a servant. I am among you, he says, is he that serveth.

The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, to give his life, a servant. Is there anything higher than that? Of course not. It was in 1957 that my wife and I had the privilege of visiting Norway, and we had a very brief visit with Dr. Hollisby, that very dear man of God who gave us some excellent volumes.

One, possibly the most read of all, is his book on prayer. Quite unique in its field, quite unique. It's a very unique approach to prayer.

We have it there. If you don't have it, you should get it and read it. Dr. Hollisby, the leading evangelical theologian in Norway for many, many, many years, but greatly persecuted because of his stand for the faith.

When we had the interview with him, he was in his 80s, he was a sick man and he lived, I think, two years following that little time we had with him. He agreed to meet us for about 10 or 15 minutes, very graciously, and we talked with him. And then before departure I said to him, Dr. Hollisby, do you have a word from the Lord for me? Most of my preaching years are ahead of me.

What do you believe the Lord would have you say to me? And I can always remember his answer. He looked at me and tears began to roll down his cheeks. He said, God is only using very few men today.

We are too big to use. Then he said, the apostles preached with all humility of mind. That's why they preached with power.

The apostles preached with all humility of mind. That's scripture, you see. That's why God used them.

They were little enough to use, low enough in their own estimate to use. Hudson Taylor, whenever we think of missions, who do we think of? Well, we think of Hudson Taylor. I've been invited to preach at the annual meeting of Team Mission in next May.

Who do I think of as soon as I begin to seek the Lord for messages? Hudson Taylor. This great father of faith missions, this pioneer. Well, he was greatly opposed in the early days because people wanted to be left alone.

When he said, we're going to send out these missionaries to China, and they said, who is going to support them? He said, the Lord is because they're his missionaries. They said, are you crazy? Well, after all, if they are his servants and they're going out at his command, he's obligated to provide for them. No support? Well, God is their support.

Yes, we know, but who is going to support them? He said, God is. They said, you're crazy. Well, they lived to see that God was faithful.

God was faithful. One time he sends 70 out on a sailing ship, 70. Who's going to support them? Well, God is going to support them.

You really mean that? Well, yes, of course. But what about the society? What about the people who are going to give money for them? I couldn't care less, you know. I don't know anything about that.

He's the man we revere. He's the man we honor. He's the man of faith.

He was in the city of Melbourne, Australia on one occasion, living in the home of this Presbyterian minister. This minister had about 250, 300 people in his congregation. He was always fussy.

He was always concerned. He was always distressed. Hudson Taylor was the epitome of serenity in his house.

He said, I can't understand you. He said, I know some of the mail you get, some of them are with me. He said, but your missionaries, some of them are in great danger.

He said, they could be killed at any moment. They could be martyred. He said, you don't seem to be disturbed.

Hudson Taylor said, of course not. They're not my missionaries. They're God's missionaries.

Why should I be disturbed? Can't he take care of them? Now, what did he learn? Well, we're going to find out a little later that every man who's ever served the Lord has to learn this lesson. First of all, you're not God. And secondly, you never relate yourself to a problem.

Never. If you want to make it your problem, all right, God will let you do it. And then you're going to have to work it out yourself.

And that's impossible. All you do is simply create more problems. What did he learn? He learned that God was faithful.

He learned that you never relate yourself to any problem. Only God does the work of God, and he does it in response to faith. Not what I feel, but what he says he will do.

God is faithful. Moses had to learn that lesson, as we shall see, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. So he looks out upon his people.

They're persecuted, they're downtrodden, and he's concerned about it. And he's going to do something about it. We read, when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.

And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him and avenged him that was oppressed, smote the Egyptian. For he supposed his brethren would have understood how the God by his hand would deliver them, but they understood not. The next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren, why do you wrong one to another? But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill me as

thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons.

Moses looks on a situation, he's disturbed by it, he's moved by it, he's compassionate, he's going to help, and he slays an Egyptian. He's emotionally oriented. God didn't tell him to do it.

God didn't tell him to do anything. What was his problem? He saw a situation, he related himself and his resources to the situation, what he could do about it, that was his problem. His motive was perfect, nothing wrong with his motive.

Here's a man totally committed, up to his understanding, to God. Totally committed. He's made a great sacrifice, refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He's identified with people in need, he's compassionate, his motive is perfect. He supposes that they would understand this, and he was courageous. We need to realize, the only thing that God blesses is his will.

He doesn't bless flesh, even though it may be well-meaning flesh. The only thing he's going to bless is what he tells us to do. And that he will do, and he will do it every time.

So Moses, courageous, compassionate, perfect motivist, perfectly wrong. He's wrong. Because this is not God's way, what happened, he fled into a wilderness.

And there he is. He's going to be there 40 years. It's a long time.

40 years in Egypt, 40 years in a wilderness. He had to learn to listen. Not only is he in a wilderness, but he's minding sheep.

The lowliest and the most despised occupation as far as Egyptians were concerned was that of a shepherd, minding sheep. And there he is out there in the wilderness. He had to learn to listen.

George Mueller said, the most important 15 minutes he spent in prayer was the 15 minutes after he said, Amen. How interesting. How interesting.

After he'd finished his praying, said Amen, then he listened for 15 minutes. Now you know what would happen if you told a person, every time you pray, that is in your quiet time, the last 15 minutes is going to be quiet, intense, expectant, waiting upon the Lord. You know what would happen.

Half of them would go to sleep and the rest would go crazy. What am I going to do? I've got 15 minutes. Just waiting, listening.

Why? Because Mueller was a man of faith and he had to be certain that what he did was what God wanted him to do. It's a wonderful thing about a life of faith. If you don't get guidance, you're finished.

You ever thought of what might have happened to Elijah if the fire had not fallen on that mountain? He'd have been in deep trouble. But the fire did fall. Why did it fall? He said, you show these people that I'm doing this at your word.

You told me to do this. He didn't think it was a great idea to go up on the mountain and get all those priests up there and then have a display and hope God would meet him. No, God told him to do it.

So God sent the fire. God sent the fire. But you have one man up there, one man against that whole company.

And God honoured him. God fulfilled his word. He said, you do it.

You do what I tell you to do and I'll meet you when you do it. But you go and do it. And he did it and God met him.

Down came the fire. God is faithful. But Moses, he's at the back side of the desert.

It's quiet. And then he marries in Egypt. Why did he marry? We don't know.

He could have married in the wilderness. He could have married in Egypt. Very beautiful women in that court.

He could have had his pick. He didn't marry. He had that consciousness that he was going to deliver his people.

He obviously kept himself separated from the Egyptians. He didn't marry. But he goes down into this wilderness and he marries.

And it was a miserable marriage. He married a very headstrong, very difficult woman and his father-in-law, what did he do? Well, he gave him sheep to mine so he had a difficult, violent, imperious woman as a wife. No sympathy with Moses and there he is for 40 years.

It's a long time. He can divide his life into three periods of 40 years each. 40 years took Moses to know that he was somebody.

40 years to know that he was nobody You know, there's some people I hear occasionally that say there's not enough activity at the institute for your students. They're not busy enough for the Lord. Well, Moses was down there 40 years and Paul was in Arabia three years.

I don't think there's much activity in Arabia. But a man can come out of Arabia a polished shaft. And what he does means something.

Achieve something. That's God's school. It's been said God only has one university and it's the university of suffering.

We don't like that. But if we suffer, we'll reign. If we're identified with the downtrodden Christ, the ignored Christ, not the popular Christ of the evangelical world, not that Christ who lives to satisfy everybody's whims and desires, not that Christ.

The Christ who says you take up a cross every day of your life and follow me. I'm talking about that Christ. You identify with him and you'll share his glory forever.

But then there came God's time for Moses. He's going to speak to him. He's going to reveal his will to him.

Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to the mountain of God even to horror. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush and he looked and behold, the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight why the bush

is not burnt.

And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, here am I. And he said, draw not thy thither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest shall be ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abram, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

And Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look upon God. He hid his face. God has appeared to him and he's going to speak to him.

Why had he not spoken before? It wasn't God's time. God always has his time. Always.

Now his time has come and he's going to speak to Moses. He's appeared to him and he says, take off your shoes. Take off your shoes.

Now why did he tell him to take off his shoes? Because he said the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Now shoes in the east are for protection against defilement and dust. No one could enter into a sanctuary with shoes.

I remember this big mosque and somebody wanted me to go into it and they said you have to take off your shoes. I said I'm not going to take off my shoes wearing any mask. So I left them on and walked away.

But you have to take off your shoes because you see to them this is holy, holy ground. And if you wore shoes you would be defiling that place. You would be defiling it.

So what does God say to Moses? You take off your shoes because you cannot have fellowship with me if there's defilement. You take them off. You're on holy ground.

There can be no defilement where I am otherwise I can't have fellowship with you. It's very important to understand that. Before Moses can hear his voice he's going to have to take off his shoes.

And what does it say to us? Before you can hear the voice of God you must deal with defilement. You'll never hear his voice. The first thing you do when God's going to speak to you is take your shoes off.

What do we mean by that? You make absolutely certain that there's not the slightest cloud between your Lord and you. That your relationship with God is in the light and your relationship with your brothers and sisters is in the light. No clouds between.

No unconfessed sin. No controversy with God of any kind. And open heart to receive the word from the Lord.

So he said take the shoes off your feet. I want to speak to you. Do you hear the voice of the Lord? Does he speak to you? If not, is it because of defilement? Some wrong attitude? Some unloving attitude? Some unsundered area of your life? Tonight you're defiled.

God wants to speak. But he's saying you deal with that defilement. Then I'll speak.

Then I'll reveal my will to you. And I'll empower you to do it. Why should we pray? Father we do thank thee for what we learn from the experience of this mighty man Moses We thank thee that he endured as seeing him who is invisible.

We thank thee for your faithfulness to him. And we rejoice tonight Father that we have more than Moses ever had. We have your son within us by his spirit.

What manner of men ought we to be? Where there is defilement, where there is deficiency, where there is lack of surrender, Father give us grace to call sin by its worst name and repent of it. Where there are wrong attitudes, unforgiving spirits, resentful spirits, disobedient spirits, proud spirits, Lord give us grace to say yes, I am the man, Lord forgive me. Where there is need of restitution, give grace to make it Lord by any road, by any means, at any cost.

Let defilement be dealt with so that we can hear thy voice and in hearing it submit to it and see thy power manifest in the doing of it. In this we pray with thanksgiving in Jesus name, Amen.

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