

# Crossing the Jordan

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[ 0 : 00 ] All right, open up your Bibles again to Joshua chapter 3.! Isn't it good that we can gather together to worship the Lord our God in a free country?

We don't worship the country, but we worship God. And we're grateful that we live in a place where we can do that without fear. And with that, I'd like to go ahead and look here at this story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan.

River. I enjoy watching TV. I don't watch many TV shows. I pretty much limit my TV watching experience to football and baseball.

And sometimes if I'm really in a pinch, I'll watch basketball. But I mean, that's rare. I really, though, I do enjoy, me and Audrey, we like watching the show Shark Tank. Anybody watch Shark Tank? Shark Tank? Yeah, Shark Tank. It's a good one.

If you don't know, the premise of the show is there's millionaire and billionaire investors who are sitting in these chairs and these entrepreneurs come in and they share their business idea in hopes that one of those millionaires or billionaires will like it and fund their next project, whether it's getting money to restock their inventory or money for marketing or whatever it may be.

[ 1 : 17 ] They stand up and they give a pitch, you know, and sometimes it's awkward, sometimes it's hilarious. Sometimes the advice they get is really mean. I mean, it's just a fun show to watch, you know.

But one thing that is pretty consistent is that, you know, throughout watching that show, what you'll hear is the message from the investors is take a leap of faith to the investors.

Take a step of faith, you know. If you really want this thing to do good, to do well, then you're going to have to stop working your full-time job and you're going to have to give everything you have to this project.

You're going to have to take a leap of faith. You're going to have to give up the security of your finances so that you can really see what this thing has for you. And this idea of taking a leap or taking a step of faith is something that's pretty much become an anthem in our world, right?

You know, you hear this actor would have been flipping burgers if they hadn't taken their shot and moved to Hollywood and then all of a sudden they're superstars or this musician was going to be an accountant, but then they stopped listening to their dad and they, you know, they dropped out of college and now they're a famous musician, a famous rock star.

[ 2 : 24 ] They took the step of faith. That's what they always call it. Well, here in the book of Joshua, we're going to read about God telling his people to do something that would be legitimately impossible to do had he not intervened.

He called them to do something impossible because we serve a God who makes the impossible possible. They were told to step into the Jordan River and the Jordan River, we're told from Joshua 3.15, at this time, it was springtime, it was harvest time, which means it was overflowing at its banks.

And if you've ever been to Israel, if you've ever been to the Holy Land and taken a tour and seen the Jordan River, you might have a picture in your mind of what that would look like. It might be something like this, which is, that's not a huge river, you know?

We have rivers like that in Tennessee. Or even something like this, which is a little bit larger. But at the springtime, back in 1200 to 1400 BC, I mean way back in the day, this water hadn't been siphoned off for farms and communities and all these other different projects.

This water, this river, was a lot larger. And in the springtime, this water was overflowing at its banks. We know from archaeological evidence, I've never done it, but I read about it, that this water could get up to a mile, this river could get up to a mile in width because of the spring, the harvest season,

the water that came through the river at this time.

[ 3 : 55 ] It wasn't a slow river. It wasn't a creek from down, you know, in the woods. This was a huge, rushing, raging river. And God told His people, walk into that water.

This was dangerous. It was risky. It was even impossible. And yet, God called them to do that. There was a massive chasm that stood between the people of God and their promised land. And the only way they would be able to cross that chasm, I read something this week that there was an experienced swimmer who tried to swim across the Jordan River in springtime in the 1800s at some point.

And this professional swimmer couldn't make it across because of how powerful the current was. The only way they were going to make it across wasn't by building a boat on one side of the river and floating across.

It was by trusting that God would provide a way. That He would take this water and turn it into a highway for them. And so that's what we're looking at today. We're talking about crossing the Jordan River, and we're talking about a God who calls His people to take steps of faith, to do what's scary, to do what's impossible.

[ 5 : 10 ] The same way the Israelites were expected to take steps of faith into the unknown with full confidence that God would do something miraculous, we are still called to the same today.

So we have to get out of our comfort zones. We have to exercise faith, and we have to trust God. Because God might be calling you to take steps of faith in your personal life. God's certainly calling our church in various ways to take steps of faith.

And we have a responsibility to be actively involved in what God is calling us to do. And sometimes it's uncomfortable. Sometimes it stretches us. Sometimes it hurts. Sometimes it's dangerous.

And still, we have to trust that God is good, He's faithful, and He's able to make a way where there really isn't a way at all. And as we look at this passage today, I want you to understand this biblical truth.

Faith in God comes before He does wonders. Faith in God comes before He does wonders. Let's pray together. Father God, You are good.

[ 6 : 12 ] You are kind to us. You love us. God, I pray as we look at Your Word right now, You would open our hearts, open our minds, help us to understand Your truth and Your ways, and help us, O God, to live for You with hearts solely focused on You.

We love You, and it's in Your Son Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Amen. So faith involves a few moving parts. You have to genuinely believe that God is going to do what He says He'll do.

You have to trust Him deeply. And faith doesn't exist where there is no trust. So from this passage that we're looking at today, there's a few things that we can see. Number one, we have to anticipate that God will move powerfully.

And as we'll go through this, we'll see joyful anticipation leads to proper sanctification, leads to proper preparation. So get ready to see what God does.

Get ready to see God part waters and move mountains, because He will, because He can. Number two, we have to listen to what God says. Good listening turns into deliberate obedience.

[ 7 : 18 ] There's a difference between hearing what God's Word says and listening and applying what God's Word says. Number three, we have to step where God leads us. Stepping where God leads us seems scary, seems dangerous.

Sometimes it's fun. But always, it is safer to step where God has told us to go than to walk anywhere else. It is more safe for us to walk into a raging river than to walk through the comfort of our own home or the walls, the halls of this church if we are not where God has told us to be.

It's always safer to be where God has us. We're going to look at Joshua 3, 1 through 5 here as we look at this idea of anticipating God moving powerfully.

Joshua started early the next morning and left the Acacia Grove with all the Israelites. They went as far as the Jordan and stayed there before crossing. After three days, the officers went through the camp and commanded the people, when you see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God carried by the Levitical priests, you are to break camp and follow it.

But keep a distance of about a thousand yards between yourselves and the Ark. Don't go near it so that you can see the way to go for you haven't traveled this way before. Joshua told the people, consecrate yourselves because the Lord will do wonders among you tomorrow.

[ 8 : 41 ] You may have noticed a theme here as we've looked at the first few chapters of the book of Joshua. The first five chapters of Joshua are really all about preparing. Get ready.

Getting ready. Gearing up. Preparing yourself spiritually. Preparing yourself physically. Preparing yourself mentally even to see God do incredible things.

The first five books of Joshua, then the chapter 6 through chapter 11 or 12 is conquest, where they, by faith, did what God called them to do. They took the land that God had given them.

So this idea of preparation runs rampant throughout the book of Joshua. In these verses, we see that they had to prepare. They had to get ready. They had to know where they were going and they had to prepare for the journey.

So they had to prepare in a few ways. Number one, they had to prepare to go when they saw the Ark of the Covenant go. So I want you to notice this. They were told that the Ark of the Covenant would go before them.

[ 9 : 41 ] When you see the Ark, verse 3, when you see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God carried by the Levitical priests, you are to break camp and follow it. You're not supposed to follow the Levitical priests. You are supposed to follow it, the Ark of the Covenant.

The Ark of the Covenant was a really big deal for the nation of Israel, for the people of Israel. You see, it was a visual representation of God's presence among them.

Okay? God had given specific instructions to make the Ark of the Covenant to Moses and he ordered it to be made and it was. The Ark of the Covenant, anybody seen Indiana Jones, Raiders of the Lost Ark?

Okay, don't worry. If you touch it, I don't think you'll turn into a skeleton or anything. The Ark of the Covenant was designed by God. It was a wooden box, okay, acacia wood.

It was overlaid with gold and it had a lid. So inside this box was supposed to be three things. One, Aaron's rod. Two, a gold bowl filled with manna. And then three, the tablets, the stone tablets where God had written, where eventually Moses had written the Ten Commandments on it for the people.

[ 10 : 46 ] Now on the lid, there were two cherubim, okay? These were designed with specific detail. These two cherubim were facing each other and in between the two cherubim is what is known as the mercy seat, okay?

So here's the deal. There was this holiday. There was this festival, this feast, this Day of Atonement for the Israelites.

It was called Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement. And on that day, that was the only day of the year that the priest could go all the way into the deepest part of the tabernacle, the deepest part of the sanctuary, which is this room called the Holy of Holies.

Only one person could go in there once a year. It was the high priest. He was allowed to go in. And when he went into this room, it was risky. He was meeting God. He was meeting God and he was offering a sacrifice, a blood sacrifice, for the sins of the nation for the previous year.

So when he offered this sacrifice, he would pour the blood on the mercy seat and God's anger would subside. His wrath would dissipate. He would receive this sacrifice and forgive the sins of the people.

[ 11 : 56 ] The sins were atoned for by the shedding of blood. By the way, does that sound familiar? This is how we're saved today. The sins of us are atoned for by the shedding of the blood of Jesus.

So, there, on the mercy seat, the Lord's presence would dwell, the priest would offer the sacrifice, and the people would be forgiven. So, when the people saw the Ark of the Covenant, they understood the significance.

They understood that this was the presence of God himself leading the people. So they were told to follow it. They had to prepare to follow the Ark of the Covenant.

The other thing that they were prepared to do was they had to keep up. They had to keep pace with the Ark of the Covenant, but at a distance. Did you notice that? It said, follow the Ark of the Covenant, but keep a distance of about a thousand yards between, or two thousand cubits.

We don't measure things by cubits anymore, so we'll say yards. That's ten football fields, by the way, okay? A thousand yards between yourselves and the Ark. Don't go near it so that you can see the way to go for you haven't traveled this way before.

[ 13 : 03 ] There's something beautiful here. I think there's two ways and then a third that we'll talk about later, but two clear ways why they were supposed to keep a distance between them and the Ark. The first is obvious and it's in the text.

Keep a distance because you don't know where you're going. Follow where God leads, but let Him lead you. You know, we have a tendency sometimes to desire to know God's will, seek God's will, and when we start to understand, okay, God's leading me to do this, then we like to jump ahead in our own wisdom and try to get ahead of where God's leading us, right?

Don't jump ahead of God leading you. Let Him lead you. So keep that distance. But then the other thing is, while God loves His people and leads His people, He's also still the holy, perfect, awe-inspiring God of the universe, and there should naturally be a distance between us. We should revere Him. We should honor Him as holy. I think too many people get comfortable with the idea of God, right? You hear things like, He's just a big man upstairs who takes care of me, you know?

Like, that's a terrible way. That's so irreverent. When we think about the God of the universe, we have to have a respect. We have to have a fear, a healthy fear of Him.

[14:17] And so I think there's two things at play right here. One is, follow where God leads. You have to be back and watch and follow. But then also, have respect for the Lord of glory.

Don't approach Him as if He's someone that you can walk up to and assume that you're on the same level as. He is holy. He is so far beyond us.

But the third way that they needed to prepare was by consecrating themselves. They had to consecrate themselves. And we don't use the word consecrate very much, okay? It doesn't mean focus.

You know? That's concentrate. Consecrate. Purify yourself. Consecrate. The word, it's from the same Hebrew word that we get the word holy.

Sanctify. Right? Make yourself holy. Sanctify yourself. Prepare yourself spiritually to follow the Lord God.

[15:19] Because, so this is why you prepare yourself spiritually. Right? This is why they were told because the Lord will do wonders among you tomorrow. So, make yourself set apart so that you can see the Holy One who is altogether set apart do amazing things.

So for them, what it would look like to consecrate themselves would be literally taking a bath. Right? Preparing physically. Cleaning themselves. Confessing sin together. Probably abstaining from sexual relations.

All those types of things. Preparing to see God do something amazing. God was telling them something. He was saying, listen, I'm going to do something that I deserve praise for and you need to be ready to see it.

Take this seriously. Take this seriously. We're not told, they weren't told what wonders God would do. They were told simply that He would do them.

That He would do amazing things. And so they had to prepare physically, mentally, they had to prepare spiritually to see God at work. And if we want to see God do amazing things in our lives and in the life of our church, we have to anticipate His work.

[16:34] The same way the people of God thousands of years ago had to anticipate the work of God, we also have to anticipate. And I don't mean that we have to guess what God is going to do in our lives or in the life of this church.

Like play a guessing game. I also don't mean that we should start speaking out bold prophecies that we just come up with to say God's going to do this and that. No, no. What we need to do is anticipate that God will do something.

And when God moves, recognize that it's Him at work and that He is deserving of all the honor and glory and praise.

I desire to see God move in this church. I desire to see Him do amazing things. But there has to be more than just desire. We need to expect that God will do amazing things.

God might raise up pastors in this church for us to send out to do gospel ministry or church planners. He might raise up church planners in this church that we can pray over and send out to plant churches to spread the gospel.

[17:34] God might save young people through the faithful work of our church and our youth and our kids ministry. Wouldn't that be amazing? If God changed lives for eternity while children were here. God might use us to be a light and a blessing to the public schools, to our community.

Wouldn't that be amazing? If God would work in our church in such a way that we could be used by Him here. God might even, listen to this, we don't like this, we used to really like this word, now

we're kind of scared of it.

God might start a revival. God might start a revival and He might even use our church to be a part of that. Wouldn't that be amazing? My point is, sometimes, sometimes we want to see God do amazing, wondrous things as long as they fit in the box that we put them in.

I want to see God do really, really good things as long as it's my idea, right? We have to stop assuming that God fits into the box of our possible minds because He can do so much greater. The people had no idea what God would do but they prepared. And when they saw, they knew that it was God at work. We need to do the same thing. God might transform lives and families through faithful and genuine discipleship in this church.

[18:50] Wouldn't that be amazing? The simple things of church life, growing in the Word of God, growing and deepening your faith, discipleship, wouldn't that be just amazing?

That's the way that God can use this church. I know many of us want to see God work in this church. So if we want to see God do these things, I would suggest that we have to live anticipating Him to do this and even more that we can't even imagine or think or ask.

So, as we anticipate, we go when God leads. They had to follow the Ark of the Covenant. We go where God leads. They went as He went. Right? They kept the distance back and they followed. And then we have to be ready to see God's glory. And when we see God's glory displayed, we have to be ready to praise Him because He is worthy. Like the Israelites had to consecrate themselves, we also have to prepare ourselves to see God move.

So confess sin, pray for our worship gatherings, and come to this place expectantly. Expecting to see God save souls. Expecting to see God move in people's lives.

[19:56] Expecting to see God do amazing things. Now, the second aspect of this, of these steps of faith is listening.

They anticipated God's Word, so they listened faithfully, or they prepared faithfully. They prepared physically and spiritually, and now they would hear what God was going to tell them to do.

Look at verses 8-13 with me. It says, Command the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant, when you reach the edge of the water, stand in the Jordan. Then Joshua told the Israelites, come closer and listen to the words of the Lord your God.

He said, you will know that the living God is among you, and that he will certainly dispossess before you the Canaanites, Hethites, Hivites, Perizzites, Gergashites, Amorites, and Jebusites, when the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, of the whole earth, goes ahead of you into the Jordan.

Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe. When the feet of the priests who carry the Ark of the Lord, the Lord of the whole earth, come in to rest in the Jordan's water, it will be cut off.

[21:00] The water flowing downstream will stand up in a mass. I want to back up. I skipped verses six and seven, and let me just explain. This is where you see an example of obedience in verse six.

Joshua told the priests to do something, and they did, and then you see in verse seven, the beginning of God speaking to Joshua, and I just real quick, I want to point something out. The Lord spoke to Joshua, but today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel so that they will know that I will be with you just as I was with Moses.

There's a real quick principle here. Humans' exaltation is God's glory, okay? Joshua, in this scene, would be exalted to a position of leadership where the people of Israel would see him and follow him and know we're following the one who is following the Lord.

But Joshua, throughout the rest of this scene, is just a participant. He's not the one leading them through the water. He didn't, like Moses at the Red Sea, put his staff into the water, right?

Joshua told the priest what to do and then he walked across with the people. But still, God used his glory to make Joshua the leader in the sight of the people.

[22:08] I think that's a powerful, a powerful truth. Human exaltation is God's glory. But back to verses 8 through 13 here. Hearing is easy, but listening is different.

I should say, hearing is easy for some. My mom, look, if she watches this, I love you, mom. She got those hearing aids and I think they need a fine tuning. You know what I mean? Sometimes hearing is easy if your pastor doesn't talk really, really fast.

You know what I mean? So I need to slow down sometimes. Hey, don't laugh that hard, Derek. Okay. But hearing is different than listening. Listening implies obedience.

It implies that you hear and you apply. Joshua, he told the people, come close. Bring it in, guys. Bring it in. You need to hear what God is saying to you. He wanted to draw them in to hear from the Lord because it was a powerful thing that the Lord had spoken.

So taking steps of faith requires stepping into the unknown, the uncertain, and sometimes the unsafe. But God called the people to obey him in a way that seemed dangerous and risky and they would.

[ 23 : 13 ] But listen to this. By listening to God's word, they would know with certainty a few things. Number one, that they served the living God. Joshua was very intentional here to make it very, very clear to the people in verse 9 that this is how you will know that, or verse 10, that the living God is among you.

And then he listed the people that they would dispossess. So unlike the Hethites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, and all those people in the land of Canaan who serve idols, who serve gods that they've carved with their own hands, they've crafted with their own metal, instead of following gods who don't have ears, don't have eyes, don't have a mouth to speak, don't have a heart of love, instead of following those false gods, you serve the living God.

You serve the living God. There's only one living God and you serve Him. By listening to God's word and obeying Him, they would know with certainty that they were following the living God. They would know also that God was sovereign over all the earth. He was going to give them this land. He was going to go ahead of you. And on top of that, He is the Lord of the whole earth. God is sovereign over the land of Israel. He was sovereign then. He's sovereign now. He's sovereign over this church. By obeying the word of the Lord, we come to appreciate the sovereignty of the Lord God, His power over all the earth.

[ 24 : 38 ] They would also know a certainty that God was among them and was leading them. By listening to His word, they were sure, they were certain, they were confident that they were following God.

When they saw victory, there wasn't a confusion. Right? It wasn't like, we did pretty good and sure, God was with us. They were confident that the Lord God was with them and leading them and was among them.

When you hear the word of God, obey it and see Him do amazing things, you are blessed with a beautiful confidence of His very presence. good listening turns into deliberate obedience.

God has given us clear instruction in His word and we have to live it out faithfully. A lot of people and a lot of churches say that they want to see God move and what they mean by that is, I want to take a back seat, sit back and watch God do everything.

Right? I don't want to be involved. But God has called His people, both in the Old Testament and the New and right now today, God has called His people not to a passive faith but to active participation in what He's doing.

[ 25 : 52 ] They still had to walk. They still had to go. By faith, they had to be obedient. God has called us to actively participate by faith in what He's doing.

So, do you want to see people come to saving faith? This is a yes or no part of the sermon. Yes or no? Do you want to see people come to saving faith in Jesus Christ? Listen to God's word and share the gospel.

Do you want to see this church flourish? Yes or no? Okay. Listen to God's word and engage in discipleship. Okay? We can't show up for a Sunday worship service at 9.30 and then disengage from the life of the church for the rest of the week and then show back up at 9.30 the next Sunday and expect that we're doing an active part in helping the life of this church and in serving faithfully. That's not listening to God's word. We kid ourselves too often when we think, when we try to claim obedience but really our obedience is warming seats. That's not the faith that God has called us to. I'm not just telling you this because I think that more people should engage in various forms of discipleship at this church whether it be Sunday morning Sunday school or Wednesday night Bible studies or the Thursday morning men's Bible study.

[ 27 : 11 ] I'm not just telling you this because I think more people need to get involved. That's not why I'm saying this. I'm saying this because God will bless you through participation in the work of His church.

God wants more for you than just coming for 30 minutes and hearing a sermon and then tapping out for the rest of the week. God desires to show you more of Himself. God desires for you to know

Him better.

God desires for you to live more like Jesus. So it's not about getting more people here. However many people we have here at this church that matters way less than that we're serving the people who are here very, very well.

We're discipling. We're raising people up. We're building up a community of the faith. So engage in discipleship here at the church. Do you want to see God at work in your own life or in the life of your spouse or friends?

Do you want to see God at work in the lives of people? Okay. Listen to God's Word. Pray for them and reflect the love of Jesus in your encounters with them.

[ 28 : 15 ] Point them to Jesus. So we have to listen attentively, they listen. He said, come close and listen. Get over here. This is serious. God's Word is a serious matter.

Listen to God's Word attentively. Read it throughout the week. Listen to more sermons. Listen to go to Bible studies and grow attentively by listening attentively to God's Word.

We have to listen spiritually. See that God here is the one who by His Word is leading His people and we trust Him by faith. And then three, listen obediently.

We don't just hear like what Chris prayed from the book of James. Help us to not be hearers of the Word only but be doers of the Word. Obediently.

Live out your faith. The point is simple. God wants more from us than just religious observance and passivity. He desires our hearts and He desires to use our whole lives but we have to listen to His Word and obey.

[ 29 : 14 ] Then and only then will we see what happens next which here is this third point, step. Taking the step of faith. We have to be willing to take the step of faith.

We have to be willing as individuals and as a church to do the crazy, uncertain, risky thing that God has called us to do or will call us to do if we're going to see Him move.

This was the moment of truth for the people of Israel. Think about it. They have been wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. Finally, they're here walking up to the river that is the only barrier between them and the land that God has given them.

This is the pivotal moment. The moment of truth. They broke in camp. They started their final journey into the land. They knew what God had called them to do and they were about to have to actually step into the river.

They were going to have to actually take the step of faith. Joshua 3, 14-17 says, When the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carried the Ark of the Covenant ahead of the people.

[ 30 : 25 ] Now the Jordan overflows its banks throughout the harvest season. This is a raging river. But as soon as the priests carrying the Ark reached the Jordan, their feet touched the water and its edge and the water flowing downstream stood still, rising up in a mass that extended as far as Adam, a city next to Zeratham, the water flowing downstream into the Sea of Ereba, the Dead Sea, was completely cut off and the people crossed opposite Jericho.

The priests carrying the Ark of the Lord's Covenant stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground until the entire nation had finished crossing the Jordan.

I want to tell you a story about a young man from the early 1900s, okay? His name was William Borden. He was the heir to a fortune but not Borden milk. It was different Borden's.

He was the heir to a silver mining fortune actually. He was Yale educated. By all accounts he was destined for greatness. But William felt called to international missions and so he decided to forego a life of wealth and become a missionary.

After experiencing a deep call to serve the Muslim population in China he traveled to prepare. Many mocked him calling it foolish. Yet, Borden pressed on. One of those who thought he was making the wrong decisions was his father and he made it clear to William that he wouldn't be a part of the family business if he made the decision to answer God's call into the mission field.

[ 31 : 49 ] At that point William wrote in the front cover on the back of his Bible on the back front page of his Bible no reserves. No reserves. Financially, no reserves. He's going anyways.

He was leaving behind comfort, security and a good life to take a step of obedience. The people of Israel had to do the same. They packed up camp and headed towards the land following where God called.

When they packed up they left with no reserves. They were not looking back. They weren't taking they weren't leaving a comfortable landing back there on the other side of the Jordan. They packed it all up and they followed where God led.

After his decision was made William spent much of his time preparing to reach the Muslims in inland China with the gospel message. He boarded a ship and headed to Egypt where he would spend time studying and preparing for the culture that he would go into.

At this point underneath no reserves he wrote two more words. No retreats. He wasn't turning back. He wasn't stopping. Now he was all the way in. He got on the ship and he headed to where God was calling him to go.

[ 32 : 55 ] He didn't know what lied ahead but he knew that he was not turning back. the Israelites making their way into the land knew that they were not going to turn back. They had to go in with the mindset that they wouldn't retreat from any enemy or danger including this rushing river.

But when William made it to Egypt he contracted an illness cerebral meningitis. It was severe and he knew that his time was short and he wouldn't make it into China to do the work he felt so passionately called to do and it was at this time that he added two more words in his Bible no regrets.

William Borden's story is a reminder that we don't know what's going to happen in the future. We don't know if the risk is going to be something that we see God overcome as he did with the waters of the Jordan River for the people of Israel or if the risk is going to be something that takes our very lives here on earth like it was in the case of William Borden.

What we do know is that living obediently and stepping out in faith when God calls us to do something is always the right response. Borden is remembered as an example of someone who was faithful and obedient when God called.

The people of Israel in this instance are examples of people who were obedient when God called in both examples we as a church should find encouragement to step out in faith knowing that God is the one who guides us and uses us.

[ 34 : 24 ] In the case of William Borden he used his faithful obedience and his tragic death to be a message for all missionaries since him for a ton of missionaries since him. God parted the waters of the Jordan so that people could walk across on dry ground and he gave them confidence and courage knowing that he was among them and leading them taking a step of faith whether in our personal life or in the life of the church is not easy but it's always good.

I like to imagine what the priests were thinking when they walked up to the edge of the water because you know they're carrying the Ark of the Covenant that's not a light box so they're walking you know and let's pretend this stair is the bank of the Jordan and they're like man I know I'm not supposed to touch this box I don't you know what I mean I don't want to touch the Ark whoo I sure hope that Joshua's right you know and they take that step they take that step and the water backed up and can you imagine the relief the relief and seeing God work and then get this the people of Israel who are back here imagine their response remember they're they're a thousand yards away and they see him and they're like oh golly I wonder how this is gonna go and they see you know they step in and they see it happen and they're just that's standing up that water's gone like you know and they're just in that moment they're just praise God praise God it's like being at a football game okay

I know it's a bad example but listen if you're in the nosebleeds and you watch have you anybody ever sat in the nosebleeds you know what I'm saying yeah I like them I actually like the nosebleeds you know why you can see the whole play open up and there's like this moment of anticipatory excitement right like back in the day I remember going to a Titans game when Chris Johnson was the running back if you don't know who Chris Johnson is look up his highlights on YouTube and you're welcome but there was a game where I was up and I remember seeing like the offensive line open this hole up and they hand the ball off to Chris Johnson and man all he needed was 18 inches of daylight you know and he was gone and I watched the whole thing unfold and I remember like yeah yeah yeah yeah and then you know he scores a touchdown yeah everybody's celebrating right when we see God do wonders we should praise louder than the attendance of any football game when we see God change lives when you see God change the life of a person in this church shout praise when you see someone declare their faith through believers baptism shout praise when you see faithful ministry and faithful service at the church shout praise when you see

God transform a family into faithful servants and participants in his work shout praise so step step of faith without looking back without wavering and without regret because going where God is leading is always better than staying where we're comfortable when we see God move in this place we ought to praise him with gladness and get this our praise will be louder when we're active participants in the wonders that God does among us your praise when you see someone that you've poured into and prayed for and shared the gospel with when you see them finally come to saving faith your praise will be louder and more energetic than if you were just here and happened to see someone walk forward your praise when you've disciplined someone and poured into them and see them finally get it and grow in their faith in a way where they're now teaching others your excitement your joy your praise will be louder than if you were just here on Sundays only in the same way the Israelites were led into the promised land by God we were led into eternal hope by Jesus Christ

Jesus entered our world he parted the waters of death by his own death because of his spilled blood we can walk on dry ground into eternity by faith in him so prepare yourself to see God at work in your life and in the life of this church for some that means that you need to confess your sin and profess faith in Jesus Christ today you can't purify yourself like the Israelites were supposed to until God has purified you through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit so come today and put your faith in Jesus some of you are convicted that you haven't prepared your heart to see God move have you come to church today or any Sunday without adequately preparing yourself to see God move I would say confess your sin confess your sin again you want God to move but only in the ways that you want him to move we want to see

[ 39 : 15 ] God do the impossible so confess your lack of faith and trust God to lead us and join in the anticipatory work of seeing God do amazing things in the lives of our people and in the lives of this church whatever it may be that God is calling you to do today we're going to sing a closing song and I'm going to invite you to stand and sing with us and pray and then obey whatever God is leading you to do if it's come forward to give your life to Jesus if it's to take a step of obedience and believers baptism whatever it may be believe today in Jesus Christ the son of God and follow him as he leads you and leads us as a church into the future let's pray together God thank you for who you are thank you oh God for the joy of your salvation I pray that you would take your word and imprint it deeply into our hearts that we would never forget the ways that you move for your people we love you Jesus it's in your name that we pray amen as a church