

One Step Closer

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[0 : 00] Today, that's all that we have. It's our faith in God. Everything else will not last, but our faith in God will continue. Amen. And so, one more time, I would just like for us to just thank Him for His presence that we have felt this morning.

And let's honor Him. Let's reach out to God in faith right now. Because faith is what we have. Lord Jesus, this day, we do thank You today. And You are good to us, Lord.

You are gracious. You are merciful. You are righteous, Lord. And there's none that likes You that's like You, Lord. We appreciate everything that You've done in our lives, God.

Thank You. Amen. For giving us the faith that we do have. Praise God. Praise God. Amen. You can be seated. Thank you so much.

This is a great day for us. Not only are we going to hear great preaching, but we're going to be baptizing Amanda in the name of Jesus at the end of this service.

[1 : 05] And that's always a great day when somebody goes down in the name of Jesus. Amen. There's no other name like that name. And it is by that name that we are saved.

And we are just so thankful for what God is doing in her life and what God is doing in the lives of so many others. And we thank you for being here today. We appreciate the fact that you took your time out today to come and be here and celebrate with us.

And God just has so many great things. We're going to get to the preaching of the word, and I'm just really looking forward to it. Let's back up the preacher today. Amen.

And let's get with them. Keep the music going. Praise God.

Well, good morning. It's good to see everybody here today. And let's take this off the thing. It's great to meet Amanda's family.

[2 : 12] Arno. Arno, Stephanie, PH. Not with an F. That's the only Stephanie's I've ever known.

It says my sister-in-law's with an F. So then we have Anna, Amanda's mother. And then we have Daniella, friends. So, so glad to have you all here this morning.

And we got Robert in the back there. Good to see you, Robert. Glad to have you this morning.

Praise God. Well, it's so good to see everybody here today. And we're just so grateful for what God has done and is doing in the church here at South Bay.

And I just, if it's okay, I just feel such a burden on my heart today.

Last few weeks, really. I mean, I just feel a burden for a particular series and messages that to some might seem very, very, well, to put it just simplistic.

[3 : 19] But I think it's just good reminders to us about the simplicity of the gospel. The simplicity of Jesus. You know, we try, you know, we don't need to make it any more complicated, really, than what it is.

And, I mean, God is already unknowable. But we can know him through his word. We can know him through the preaching of the word. We can know him through the word of God and through prayer and just seeking him.

And so, I want to continue this series that we've been in. And it's what God is here will still get us there. What God is here will still get us there.

And for, well, let's just read the verses of the scriptures that we've got today. Let's go to Genesis chapter 12. Genesis chapter 12, verse 1.

And put your thumb on Hebrews 11 and 8. If you're there, say amen. All right.

[4 : 28] And we've got it on the screen, I believe. So, here we go. Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house unto a land I will shew thee.

Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred. And I will show you unto a land that I will shew thee. Let's go to Hebrews 11, verse 8.

Let's go to Samuel. there say amen by faith Abraham he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive an inheritance obeyed and he went out everyone say obeyed Abraham obeyed and went out not knowing whether he went God called him he obeyed not knowing whether he went and the help of God and just the time that we have I want to talk to us on this simple thought one step closer one step closer amen let's pray for a moment and let's ask for God's help today Father we love you today Jesus we thank you Lord for your word and for your promises Lord we thank you for your people that are here today God help me to preach the word do a good job Lord bring thoughts to my mind and help me to preach in the unction and the anointing of the Holy Ghost help us to be not just hearers of the word but God doers of the word because God you are working to get us one step closer to your promise

Lord to your plan for our lives we ask in the powerful and mighty name of Jesus and everybody said in Jesus name amen amen have you ever wished or thought that you could see the future you ever thought you could look into the future not forever not forever I'm just saying look to see if the decision that you made was actually the right one the job decision the relationship decision the church move you know are these decisions that I'm making are they the right ones that I moved to the right city did I move to the right neighborhood did I move to the right whatever it might be was it the right thing to do and just for a moment there's a thought

I wish I could just look into the future a little bit so I could see if that was actually if it's all going to work out if it's all going to pan out if the relationships that I broke ties with or the little relationships that I brought into my life are they going to actually work out maybe there was a life change you made of some kind and you're still wondering man is it going to work out and you may have thought or wished that you know what maybe someone can hand you a map that you could look and see if the map shows you exactly where to go but the thing is that most of life doesn't work that way most of the time we don't get the whole picture of what's happening you know we do the best that we can we pray we see God we look to his word and we make the best choices the wise choices that we can that they will actually work out in our favor or for our family's favor most times we make decisions for our family's sake they won't actually benefit me but because of my children or because of my husband or because of my wife and we just in our lives we just get the next step can you just say that with me we get the next step and that's the thing in life in serving God is that we get the next step the next thing that we are to do and you know there are some planners in here there are some people that project a year out six months out five years out

[8 : 48] I don't know maybe you are maybe you're not I know I'm not I'm looking just to the next hour what are I honey what are we doing today what's our calendar look like there's times where I look at my calendar and I'm like oh where did that happen where did that come up or I get a little alert saying this has been added to the family calendar oh I got a dinner to go do tonight okay cool I'm going to hang out with some people maybe that's how it is for you you don't quite know what you're doing that day you got to ask your spouse but that's how it is in life but really spiritually that's kind of how it works too living for God God rarely unveils this whole plan for our lives it's one step at a time one thing unfolds after another amen and when we take that step hear me when we take that next step we move one step closer everyone say one step closer one step closer to what God prepared for our lives can I tell you that God has a plan for your life

I don't know how many of us have grown up in that hearing that but I can tell you for a certainty God has prepared a plan for our lives every one of us God's got a purpose and a plan for our lives and every time that we take we obey the step that God has put before us we are getting one step closer to his purpose and to his plan for our life amen I just feel that right now someone needs to hear that someone needs to hear the fact that God has is orchestrated in your life today it's not by accident that you're here hearing the word of God you're here for a reason you're in this church for a reason today amen and if you get nothing else I want to tell you something God's got a plan there's a step prepared for you before you amen and he wants you to know what that next step is for your life praise God you know one of the greatest stories one of the greatest characters in the Bible begins exactly that way and we talked to him briefly last week and it's it's Abraham or Abram come on we know him we sang the song last week should we sing it again

Father Abraham had many sons had many sons had Father Abraham I am one of them and so are you so let's just praise the Lord I sang that song in Salinas last Sunday and everybody knew it they

were they were already standing up ready to do the march left hand right but the story that we read earlier at the beginning was about Abram and it's the story about a man named Abram and his family but we look at Abram and where he's living hallelujah Abram lived in a city called or named the Ur of the Chaldees and it's located in a place ancient ancient place called Mesopotamia or a place I guess you could describe it as the land between the two rivers and he lived in this ancient land between the Tigris River and the Euphrates River in the Middle East

I guess you can call it modern day Iraq and 4,000 years ago turn to the neighbor and say that's a long time Ur was one of the most advanced cities in the world there was trade there was bargaining there was merchants there were temples above the skyline ziggurats places of worship the largest ziggurat or the place of worship was in Ur and in that known land early life and the Sumerians were in that area but this is where Abram lived home was there family was there security but Ur was filled with something else Ur was filled with idolatry Ur was filled with idol worship they worshiped false gods gods that weren't the true or the one true god and statues were set up and erected and people bowed to these statues and the entire culture trusted man made things kind of some familiar today trusting man made things or man erected things thinking this is what's going to save me this is what's going to help me in my life things that couldn't speak idols that couldn't move idols that couldn't save or do things in fact there's an old traditional story about Abram this is not scripture but this is a story passed down through tradition through ancient

Jewish writings and it captures something powerful about Abraham which is story says that Abram father was an idol maker and he had a shop and so one day Abram was in that shop by himself Abram grabbed a hammer I don't know if it's a sledgehammer or a hammer something just to knock it over knock those idols but he started smashing all the idols that were in that shop but one this large idol and he left it in the middle of the shop and his dad comes in and as you can expect what are you doing what why are you destroying all these idols that I made he said who did this he said the big one and his father said that's impossible the idols can't do anything and Abraham replied exactly it's got no life it can't help you it can't save you it can't do anything at some point

[14:56] Abram realized something in his life he realized that the gods that his people had trusted were powerless he realized that the gods that his people put their trust in that they defended were empty and were unable to help him they weren't living they weren't powerful and they weren't able to help us he Abram had to stop trusting those false gods and can I just say that sometimes the first step towards God is that we got to start smashing some idols in our lives the first step in our walk with God and our first step in walking to God is that we got to smash some idols in our life idols of pride and idols of sin and idols of self and idols of comfort the things that we think are going to help us and truly they're not going to help us idols of alcohol and drugs and promiscuity and all these things that we think are going to make us feel good and do better because before following the living God you have to stop trusting things that can't save you can I hear an amen hallelujah and then one day God spoke to

Abram one day God spoke to Abram in Genesis 12:1 says get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house and lead the land that you know the life you know lead the security that you know this is what God is asking Abram to do you've been here a long time and you've built connections and you've built family and you've built all these relationships but I know I'm going to uproot you because I've got a promise that I want to work through you I want you to go to a land that I'm going to show you later that's crazy I'm going to show you later Abraham I want you to get but I'm going to fulfill this thing later you're not going to know exactly what I'm going to show you but I'm going to show you this later I didn't give him a Thomas Guide map he knows what a Thomas Guide is that's probably aging myself yeah I know he didn't give him a GPS he didn't give him an iPhone with Google

Maps on it or with whatever or Waze if you're a Waze person wave your hands if you're a Waze person I don't know but he tells him to get up and to go God didn't explain everything that would unfold he didn't show him the final destination he just said go he said go I mean put yourself in Abram's shoes imagine stepping outside his tent that morning looking at the city that you've known hearing the markets and the people and hearing the sounds of what you're familiar with the streets and seeing the temples and the skylines and everything that I felt normal realize that you're going to walk away from this that God has called you away from this God is saying I want you to get up and I want you to go not because he had a plan but because he heard the voice of God you see when Abraham left not everyone this is important when Abraham left not everybody would have

understood how many questions do you think

Abraham got how many when he said hey I'm going to be taken off because God told me how many people you think asked him hey what are you talking about Abraham he was leaving the religion of his culture leaving the stability of his city leaving the expectations of his family and just imagine the conversations hey I'm I'm leaving where are you going I don't know yet but God just told me to go God told me to do something why would you leave this place Abraham there's security here Abraham couldn't fully explain because obedience often looks strange to people to people who haven't heard the voice of God and I'm going to tell us something here today I've experienced this in my life when I was 16 years old and I decided I was going to live for God that God filled me with the Holy Ghost I was baptized in Jesus name I got questions why I was doing what I was doing I got questions why I was serving God the way I was

I got questions why I was coming to the house of God on Sunday why I walked from 1st Street over here to 6th Street I got questions about why I was leaving you know I was telling Amanda on our Bible study the other night you know when I got saved I left my band that I was in and I got questioned I can't explain everything all I know is that I have experienced a power that I never experienced before I have experienced God almighty Jesus Christ and he changed my life he's in me he's helping me he's saving me and I put in my trust in him and if it means that I got to leave some things if that means I got to start doing some other things to serve him then that's what I'm going to do amen hallelujah hallelujah because there's blessing in obedience should your neighbor say there's blessing in obedience there really is hallelujah because sometimes when you follow [20 : 44] God not everyone is going to understand but obedience is not about pleasing the crowd hello obedience is not about pleasing your neighbor about pleasing your family about pleasing obedience is about pleasing God God I want to please you God I want to serve you because I love you above all else Lord hallelujah praise God hallelujah church hallelujah see the new testament as we read earlier looks back on Abram Hebrews 11 8 says by faith Abraham obeyed everyone say obeyed he obeyed and he went out not knowing whether he went I mean I noticed the connection by faith Abraham obeyed what you have to understand is that faith and obedience are inseparable in scripture it's not one or the other faith and obedience are tied together and linked together and you're asking the question well what is obedience biblically it's trusting

God enough to act on what he has said the word believe in scripture insinuates or tells you or says and means that it's going to be a total reliance upon that you are relying upon you are throwing yourself upon this so when you say I believe God that means you are relying on him for your security you're relying on him for your safety you're relying on him for your blessing for all your outcomes for your walk with God that's what beliefs so when you say I believe God that means that you can trust him entirely Lord can I also say something faith and obedience is when you act upon what God has said even when hear me even when you can't see the whole picture even when you can't see the whole thing Abram

I'm going to bless you I'm going to send you to a land you don't know okay Lord and that was it how is it faith believes God and obedience moves Abraham did not just believe God existed he believed God enough to move his life anyone can say they believe in God but biblical faith always produces obedience to his word God I'm going to do this I'm going to serve you I don't quite have all the answers yet God but I'm going to trust you faith moves when God speaks and every step of obedience moves us one step closer to the purpose of God hallelujah psalm 119 105 says thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway notice the scripture did not say it's a spotlight it's a spotlight illuminating the whole roadway it says he gives us a lamp to our feet enough light enough light for the next step what's the next step

God's putting before you today what's the next step God's putting before you here this morning hallelujah because God is wanting to move us one step closer one step closer to him one step closer to his purpose amen some people are waiting for God to explain everything first but often God works the other way around first comes the step and then comes the understanding first comes the obedience and then comes the unfolding of the promise hallelujah I'm going to tell somebody today if you're here and you're wondering and you're waiting I'm telling you if you'll take your first step if you'll step forward hallelujah if you just trust God and obey him God will begin to unfold the plan and begin to unfold the thing in your life that you've been wondering and worrying about hallelujah but you've got to take that first step hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah

God's not done with you today I want to tell somebody God's not done with you God's not finished with you God's not throwing you aside don't think it's all over because you messed up one time because you failed one time hallelujah telling you to get back up and take another step get back up and take another step today hallelujah oh!

[25 : 39] weed if we done some drugs if we dried I don't know what it might be I'm telling you God is faithful God loves you hallelujah I'm fulfilling the Holy Ghost today somebody needs to understand God is willing to forgive us hallelujah if we confess our sin he is faithful and he is just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness come on somebody hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah Abraham's now marching through deserts he's marching across the fertile crescent he's marching now to Haran and on his way to Canaan weeks turns into months and tents are rising and being torn down walking one step closer towards the promise he had never seen he had never only heard and commanded by God but every mile hear me hear me every mile and every step was bringing him one step closer hallelujah

God God tells Abraham I will make of thee a great nation and in these all the families of the earth shall be blessed through his seed was born the Messiah was born the Savior of the world Jesus Christ who died for my sins and died for your sins and that was promised and that was fulfilled in the name of Jesus hallelujah he can save me he can save you Jesus can save all those who put their faith in him hallelujah praise God Jesus think about that Isaac Jacob the nation prophets the coming of Jesus Christ all of it begins because one man obeyed and took one step closer one step closer to God can I tell us today that you never know how far obedience will travel you never know how far obedience is going to go one prayer one act of faith one moment you surrender to God one moment you say yes Lord

I don't see the whole thing yet but God I'm going to do what you've asked of me to do God I'm going to believe it Lord in spite of what the critics say in spite of what others may be saying about me and my life I'm going to obey you because I love you Abraham didn't know he was starting the story that would bless the entire world he just obeyed the step God showed him that one step one foot after another one step closer to the promise of God there was a man in the scripture not in the scriptures but in the apostolic history named A.D.

Urshan many will not know who this man is but he goes way back in the early 1900s and when the Pentecostal movement the apostolic movement was starting and was being understood through the scriptures there was a man in A.D.

Urshan who was born in Persia I'm just going to read a little excerpt here and he came to the United States searching for truth from Persia and while he was here he encountered Pentecostal revival and he had received the Holy Ghost but God began to deal with him and God called him back to Persia and to preach the gospel Persia was not a Christian nation there was danger there was uncertainty but Urshan obeyed and he went back he preached Jesus to this nation people received the Holy Ghost thousands responded to the gospel and revival spread through that region A.D.

[29 : 49] Urshan didn't know he was starting a movement he didn't know that he was starting this revival he just simply took this next step that God had showed him and impressed upon him and that step that step moved thousands of people one step closer to God one step closer to the Lord amen because this man had obeyed what God had called him to do amen this morning this morning this the next step for you in your life it may look different for everybody in this place for someone here the next step for you might be forgiveness forgiveness somebody here today I don't know what your next step might be but you know what your next step is that next step might be forgiveness to release some hurt they have some wounds and some scars in your life to let go of bitterness maybe you're here today and you're carrying bitterness over what someone did to you or what someone said to you for someone else the next step might be repentance turning back to

God for someone here the next step is the new birth maybe you need to repent of your sins and you need to be baptized in Jesus name maybe you need to be filled with the Holy Ghost amen today maybe you need the Holy Ghost today amen hallelujah I'm so excited for Amanda and her journey amen it's so beautiful she she is somebody we can talk about that says she's been taking one step after one step after one step she's came to the church because God orchestrated it she believed on God she asked questions came faithfully God filled her with the Holy Ghost she decided she's going to get baptized she's going to obey be baptized in Jesus name hallelujah and I tell you something she is an example that there's blessing in obedience God and our Bible said she says I want to understand more and more and I want to understand more of what

I'm doing it's so refreshing to hear those words and those questions hallelujah because you know what God is faithful and God is being faithful to you and you will continue to be faithful in your life amen get connected stay connected hallelujah God's got great plans for your life and he's unfolding praise be to God hallelujah hey for somebody else your next day might be faithfulness faithfulness in giving faithfulness in prayer faithfulness in showing up to church into the house of God faithfulness in walking with God even though your family or neighbors are telling you to stop I'm telling you it's not about perfection it's just faithfulness faithfulness faithfulness praise God hallelujah that's all standard today hallelujah hallelujah Jesus every step

God moves you one yet one step closer you may not see the whole road but you don't need the whole road you just need the next step you just need the next step because every step of obedience every step of obedience moves you one step closer to the promise God has spoken so to this morning I want to ask this what is the step God has already shown you what is the step God I can feel right now God is already drawing you God's already tugging at your heart you can feel the hand of God saying come on come on get close get close

Jesus Jesus suffered he was betrayed he was lied on he was beaten he was crucified for you and I hallelujah what is it that God is showing you do you need to forgive someone do you need to repent do you need to surrender to God because when you obey a step the next right step you move one step closer one step closer to him Jesus Abraham didn't know he just obeyed and through him we really were blessed in the coming of our Savior

[35 : 22] Jesus Christ and that Savior that came through the line of Abraham is here this morning speaking to all of us touching our hearts our minds and our lives and he's saying will you obey will you trust me will you have faith enough trust me today I don't know what you're all going through this morning I've got my own troubles and I've tried to do things on my own and I've tried to do things on my own hands only to make things worse but when I release them to God God I don't know what the next thing to do God I don't know how I work this out I was going through a difficult time in existence we all have to do I'm going through a hard time mentally

I don't struggle to start to church show it without God prayer! God God I got my phone with a pastor. He's a sort of brother that I had only really done one time. I talked to him. He said, God told me to tell you. He said, everything is good. He's a pastor.

He said, oh yeah, God knows where you are. I know what you're going through. I know where you are. He said, oh, well, I'm not thinking better. He is.

You know what you've got to do? You've got to take one step. You've got to take one step. One step closer to him. Say his word. Ask forgiveness. Seek forgiveness.

[37 : 43] Come on. Hallelujah. You want your life to get better? Make that next step. You want your life to improve? Make that next step. Hallelujah. What are we afraid of?

I think we're afraid of. We're looking foolish. I don't want to tell you today. Let's pray. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

I want to open this altar. I want to open this altar. If you want to realign yourself to God. If you want to get realigned to God and take one step.

[39 : 47] This is your one step this morning. Maybe this is your one step today. Come into this altar. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Jesus. Yes.

Oh God. Calling us deep, girl. I can hear the voice of the Lord.

Calling us deep, girl. Calling us deep, girl. I'm no longer satisfied.

That's it. Hallelujah. Come on. Come on. Hallelujah. The door's open. If you're the well that won't run dry. This is more than just a cry.

But this is my covenant. That I won't keep running. Because I can hear the voice of the Lord.

[40 : 50] Calling us deep, girl. Calling us deep, girl. Oh, oh. I can hear the voice of the Lord.

Calling us deep, girl. Calling us deep, girl. I'm no longer satisfied.

Why would I thirst for the Lord. The well that won't run dry. This is more than just a cry.

But this is my covenant. That I...