



# Independence Church Of Christ

*Sharing The Freedom That Is In Christ*

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LESSON FOR SUNDAY, JULY 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## HOW TO MOVE FORWARD IN FAITH!

This week we want to conclude our July series on *Faith That Can Move Mountains* by discussing *How To Move Forward In Faith!*

*Forward*  
in **FAITH**

### **How do you *move forward in faith* when...?**

...you can fill in the blank (in sickness, disappointment, betrayal, job loss, financial difficulties, depression)... the list could go on and on and on! How do we *move forward in faith* when we are paralyzed by the many different kind of fears that bombard us in life?

In early 2013 a man named Robert Best walked into the home of Alan Dillman. Robert came to kill both Alan and his wife. Here's the reason why. Dillman's sixteen year old daughter Grace had become angry with her parents because they disapproved of her online relationship with Robert Best! Best was sentenced to eight years in prison as a result. His sentence was reduced primarily because of Alan Dillman's testimony. Mr. Dillman said this at the sentencing: "***I've forgiven Robert for his attack. While I'm convinced his intentions were evil, I also believe he's simply a lost soul looking for some direction and meaning in his life.***"

**Here's a question:** *Who do you think would be harder to forgive? Robert Best or your daughter who planned the whole thing and disabled the security system and left the door unlocked so Robert Best could get in?*

## How do you *move forward in faith* when...

How would you *move forward in faith* in that situation (or any other difficult pothole along life's journey, for that matter)? What are some keys to not only persevering (treading water) but making progress?

I've wondered how Jacob did it (Genesis 45:26)! I wonder if Jacob considered leaving his 10 sons behind! Picture his swing of emotions. On one hand Jacob is ecstatic! ***My son Joseph is alive. This is great. Thank you for telling me. Wait a minute. What do you mean he's alive? 22 years ago you brought me his special coat covered in blood. You led me to believe an animal devoured him. You watched me grieve for days and said nothing.*** Can you imagine the mixture of emotions Jacob must have felt? On one hand he's thrilled that Joseph is alive, but on the other hand – *how disappointed must he have been in his own sons!*

What level of disappointment Jacob must have had with his 10 sons! But that was “*then*” and this is “*now*”. If you are struggling with life's potholes, take Jacob's next step! ***Move forward in faith!***

## Move forward in faith!

### ***Jacob did!***

**...Alan Dillman was stabbed and betrayed. Jacob's own sons lied to him. Have your dreams been crushed because of what someone did to you? What LIFE has done to you?**

We let people and we let circumstances hold us captive. LIFE'S CHALLENGES – whether they come from a person, ourselves, or God – often can crush our dreams. So, what do we do? ***Move forward in faith!*** But how? How do we move forward in faith?

Jacob shows us how. **Go back to Genesis 46:1! Beersheba was a special place to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** (look at Genesis 21:33). There are certain places in this world that connect us to God. I hope one of them is right here (our church sanctuary). But it can't be just here. One of mine is (or used to be) on a golf course. But why go golfing? Because there I can seek God! If you want to move forward in faith – seek God's guidance. Are you facing a big move? Do you have a critical decision to face? ***Seek God!*** Fast! Pray! Create a Beersheba. *Where is your Beersheba?* Somewhere in your home or outdoors? *Where is there a place where you can go to seek God?*

## Move forward in faith!

I have found that seeking God means you just might hear from Him. Jacob did (read verses 2-3).

What's the big deal about going to Egypt? Jacob is leaving behind everything that's familiar. He's leaving the land of his birth! Genesis 47:9 tells us Jacob is 130 years old. I have found that most people, especially older people, are not very interested in change!

Did you notice that God sometimes calls him Jacob and other times God calls him Israel? That's because Jacob is a person, but Israel is a nation. Verses 8-27 list the descendants of Jacob. Verse 27 says there are **70** total people. **Look at this picture.** Israel is one tiny nation (population 70)! This group of 70 leaves Hebron and travels 25 miles SW to Beersheba. Beersheba is a warning sign. It's like driving out of Western

Kansas on your way to Denver. Once you leave Beersheba you'd better be gassed up and ready to go because there's no turning back. **Jacob has multiple reasons for being afraid.** The travel will be grueling. Several days of desert traveling. Jacob is not the only one leaving Canaan. The nation of Israel is leaving Canaan. No Israelites will occupy Canaan for the next 430 years. God will not be present. Jacob worships one God. The Egyptians worship multiple gods. **God tells Jacob NOT to be afraid!** It's one thing to hear from God. It's altogether different to actually do what God says! **Do you want to move forward in faith? Then take God at His word!**

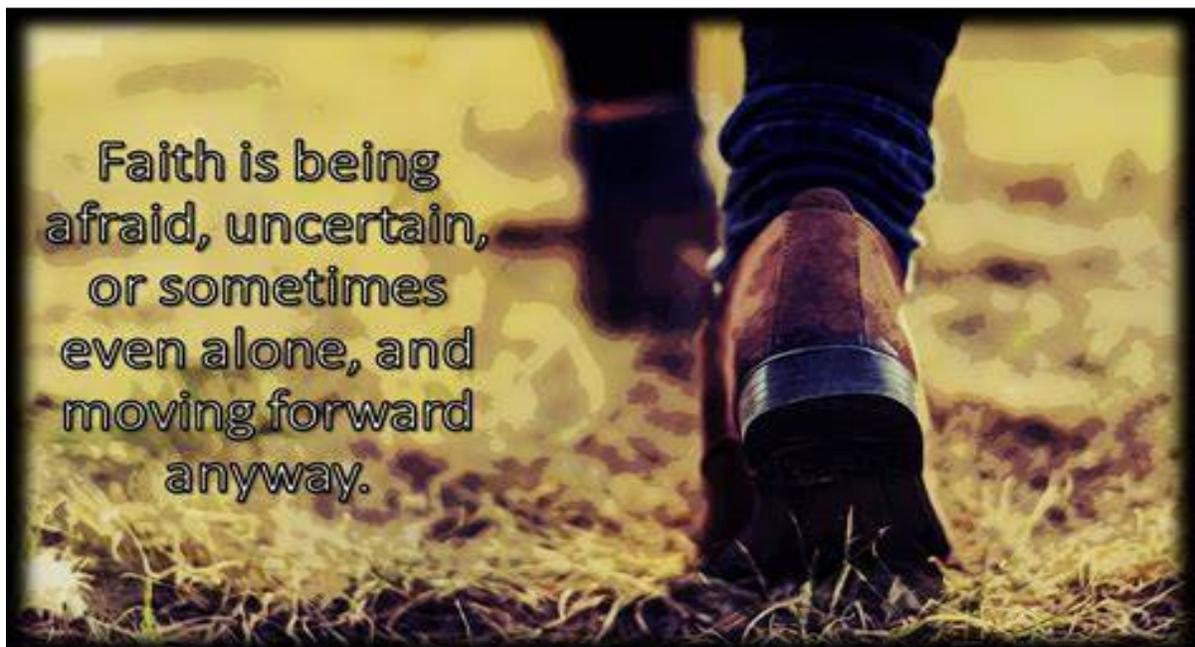
## **Move forward in faith!**

Could it be that the main reason we are not growing as Christ's followers is because of our paralyzing fear? Could it be our refusal to address *head on* life's many challenges (i.e. Potholes and Pitfalls)? ***It's high time we move forward in faith.***

**What was Jacob's main motivation for going to Egypt? (verses 28-29).** Jacob wants to see Joseph. Nothing is going to prevent him from seeing his beloved son. How anxiously do you want to see Christ Jesus? WHO or WHAT is the Object of your Faith? Do you want to be in Jesus' presence, now and for all eternity? Do you want to hear from Him? The truth is, we have already heard from Him. Jesus said, *"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. Jesus said, "Forgive them! For they know not what they are doing!* To move beyond life's obstacles and pitfalls often means to ***let it go! To send away! To erase!*** Take God at His word when it comes to getting past life's debilitating obstacles. If you do – you will be free!

# **FORWARD**

*in* **FAITH**



## **BY FAITH – Hebrews 11:20-29**

*By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. (verse 20)*

*By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. (verse 21)*

*By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones. (verse 22)*

*By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. (verses 23–26)*

*By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw Him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel. By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned. (verses 27–29)*

## **MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH - Hebrews 12:1-3**

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. <sup>2</sup> We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. <sup>3</sup> Think of all the hostility He endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up.*

