

God's Provision and Route

by Francois Carr

God plans the route of our lives to teach us how to walk with him, how to serve him, and how to worship him.

Duration: 1:13:00

Scripture: Exodus 13:17, John 17:18

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Gods Providence"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing that God has a purpose and plan for each individual's life, even in the midst of challenges and dead ends. It highlights the need to trust in the Lord, follow His leading, and understand that God's provision for success includes learning to rely on Him in every aspect of life. The sermon encourages listeners to see their current circumstances as God's invitation to deeper faith, trust, and transformation into the likeness of Jesus.

Transcript

Well, it's a joy to be with you again tonight as we continue our study from the life of Moses, especially the journey that he was taking all the way from the mountain of Sinai back to Egypt, and then from Egypt back to the mountain of Sinai in the desert, and from there making his way towards the promised land. We have looked very briefly on Sunday morning at the purpose that God has in mind for Moses from the very beginning, which is part of God's purpose for you and I even tonight. We look at the plan that God had in mind to bring the people out of bondage from Egypt through the wilderness into the promised land, and ultimately for us as Christian people to become more and more into the image and the likeness of his son.

We look at the place very briefly. We spend some time looking at the path that God wants to take of every one of us, and last night we just looked from the perspective from God's side when God changes your name from just a normal name to this man that God can use like Moses so mightily in days gone by. But you know tonight I want us to continue just to look at God's provision for success, and if you study the Old Testament you find I mentioned a couple of things on the screen for you to in order for us to be successful and to arrive at the place where God has in mind for us, we need to learn how to follow the Lord.

First of all, in the book of Exodus chapter 13, which we have read together tonight, then we need to learn how to trust the Lord in every aspect of their lives, and then we know how to glorify and to praise the Lord if we want to be successful in a journey to arrive at the place that God has in mind for every one of us. You know this morning as I was praying, that's why I have the screen on tonight, I wasn't sure what God has in his heart for us tonight, and I just felt as I was praying throughout the day to just to do a combination of

these three different messages because it's three different messages that God has birthed in my heart and just share a few things with you tonight and lay the foundation for a message that God has put to my heart for tomorrow night to send you away from our time together with the talents that you can go deeper and deeper with God in this time that we were together, especially when I'm leaving on Thursday morning to the different the next place and the next couple of days following that every time is different, every church is different, every message will be different it seems to me, but I want to leave you behind tomorrow night with something that you can take back home and maybe do something with that in the days to come, because ultimately you will have to choose how close you want to get to God for the rest of your life, out of the example from the life of Moses. You know some time ago, in fact a few years ago, there was a famous guy, his name is Andre Rieu, he came to South Africa for the very first time to play the violin.

Now in that time he came to South Africa in the month of April, and I remember for the very first time in the last six or seven years, I was in the month of April around that time that he came to South Africa, I was at home, because usually I preach in the States in that time, but other places in Europe the message of revival. So every year I miss my wife's birthday that takes place on the 23rd of April, but this time I was at home, and I realized as he was coming to South Africa he will be playing the violin at a specific place in South Africa on Friday night the 23rd of April, my wife's birthday. So behind the scenes I found some tickets for my wife and myself to go and to listen to this guy, and I knew from the very beginning by the time we get to the show, the theater, he will be playing the violin, and my wife will have a wonderful time, and I will find a good time just to have a nap in the evening, because I don't like to play listen to the violence, but she loved to listen to that.

But I remember buying the tickets, and I realized as I was buying the tickets just before that show will take place in South Africa, I was scheduled to preach in Poland on a Thursday night, a Friday, and a Saturday on a conference on revival, some meetings Sunday morning, Sunday night, Monday, and Tuesday, then fly back on Wednesday to be in South Africa arriving on Thursday morning to be in time for my wife's birthday on Friday for the very first time. As I was arriving in Poland in a place called Warsaw, the city, the main capital of Poland, there was a little bit of unrest taking place in the city of Warsaw, because just a few weeks from before the president of Poland and a great deal of his cabinet, the parliament of Poland died in a plane crash in Russia. It was in the news for some time all over the world, and there were literally thousands and thousands of people just standing in the streets of Poland and Warsaw in that moment.

They all had the same question, why did God allow a crisis like this to happen in Poland in that moment? But there was cameras from the BBC and from Sky News and from Fox News and from CNN in America and from all over the world, they were there. But thousands and thousands of people just standing right there in the streets of the city of Warsaw asking the same question, not knowing what to answer, because you can see in their faces they were really struggling with the issue why God allowed this to happen. But I remember as I started the conference preaching on Thursday night, something happened in that same time.

There was a volcano outburst in the northern parts of Europe and in Iceland in that moment, and the cloud of ashes was just going right over Europe in that time, and because of that all the airplanes were grounded and all the airports were closed down. And a friend of mine came to me, his name is Mark Parton, he's in Tennessee, he's a pastor. He said, Frans, how are we going to get back home because all the airplanes are grounded and the airports are closed down? I said, I've got no idea.

So we started to look at the news channels to see when are they going to open, because my first thought was if I'm going to be back in time in South Africa to take my wife for that special show that I planned for her and the tickets that I bought in South Africa to listen to this guy playing the violin for us back home in South Africa on the Friday night. But I remember the next morning as I was having my quiet time, God started to speak to me about what is happening in Poland in that moment, especially in my own life, and teaching me the principles that God wants me to learn and to understand in that moment. And as I was reading through the life of King David in that moment, God taught me something from the life of David.

He showed me there were four times in the life of David that he finds himself in a crisis moment. But every time when something happened in the life of David, David was taking the place of prayer. He called for the priest, he called for the shoulder cloth, and I went to pray and ask God what is happening at the moment.

And one of those instances, he said, Lord, what should we do? And God said, you have to conquer the next day. And he said, when should we do that? God said, you should go by tomorrow. And this is how you should be doing this.

And then you will hear my footsteps even in the trees of the mulberry as well. Then you know that I have prepared the way for you. And as I was reading that, God said, listen, Francois, just like David, trust me day by day, and I will bring you back to South Africa in good time.

But I remember one of those days as I was sticking my hand like this, and just on the top of the vehicles and the places where I was staying in the windows, you can see the white of the ashes in my hand because of the cloud of ashes because of the volcano. And all the airports was just closed down and the planes was just grounded and nobody was flying anywhere. But I remember Tuesday night, that was the fifth or the sixth day, as I preached the last sermon in Poland, we had two meetings on that Tuesday night.

You know, the people, there are only 20 or 25,000 Christians in Poland at the moment out of population of almost like 40 plus million people. And when they hear there's a special meeting like this, and they come from all over to listen to a message when you're preaching. And I remember there was two meetings.

The first one took place for about an hour and a half, and then there was a break for tea. And then there was a second meeting. But by the time we were finished around 10, 10.30 that evening, everybody went home.

And I was scheduled to fly back the next day on Wednesday. We drove all the way down from a place called Lesno to Warsaw, six hour drive away. And as we got to the place where we were staying in Warsaw, I was so tired.

I just dropped and just fell in the bed with my clothes on, and I just slept. But the next morning, a man came to me. His name is Kamil.

He said, Francois, would you please come with us? And as I walked with him, we went to a place and there was a studio and there was a special recording about what is happening in Poland at the moment. And how can the message of revival be a benefit for the people of Poland in such a crisis moment as this? And I talked for them for 45 minutes about why possibly God is allowing this to happen in the Polish land and amongst the hearts and the people of the Polish churches and Christians in that moment. By the time we were finished, I said to Kamil, would you please take me to the airport? He said, Francois, according to the internet, the aeroplanes are still standing grounded and the airports are just closed down.

We can go for lunch. I said, no, let's go to the airport. I'm scheduled to fly today back home to Munich and Germany and from there back to Johannesburg in South Africa.

Let's go to the airport. So we drove the two hours to the airport. We came there and suddenly the airport just opened.

Only one flight scheduled to leave from Warsaw, Poland to Germany. And I found a seat in that plane. And I was sitting in the plane.

We flew all the way to Germany. And as we arrived in Munich in that moment, the airport just opened for the first time in six days. And thousands and thousands and thousands of people were inside the airport in that moment.

You know, as I was sitting there connecting my laptop and drawing my emails, there was about 200 plus emails that came through my system in that moment. And one of them as I screened them was from South African Airways and said, listen, your seat for tonight to fly back to Johannesburg has been confirmed. Do you accept your seat number? Just click here.

And as I clicked on that thing, I received a reference number. And as I sit and as I look around me, I see thousands and thousands of people standing and waiting list upon waiting list upon waiting list to fly either to America or someplace in Europe or South Africa, even to South Africa. Six days of waiting lists, six flights.

And God gave me a seat. But as I was sitting there and I saw that, I started to cry because I just realized what God has done, just as he told me that he will do. You see, there was no hope for me to get back to South Africa in time.

And every now and then there was a little bit of hope that becomes a false hope, thinking maybe the airport will open tomorrow. Maybe the flights will leave tomorrow. Maybe there's a possibility of finding a different route to go back to South Africa.

But then I had real hope when God spoke to me that I can put that in my heart and know that this thing is finished. And I want to speak to you about that tonight very briefly. And I want to put two or three messages together.

And I'm not going to preach to you tonight. I want to give you a few principles that you can take back home with you. And maybe take some time to reflect upon that, because you might find yourself like myself in Poland, in a dead end in that moment in your Christian life and your walk with God.

And God might take you a different route as well. And I want you to see that tonight. And I'm going to put a few things together and you will understand what I what I'm trying to say when I speak about that.

And the first thing I want you to see as we turn to the book of Exodus chapter 13 again from verse 17 through to 22. I want us to look very briefly at some points of following the Lord in our walk with him in this moment. The first thing that I want you to see is that God plans the route of our lives.

Look at what the Bible tells us in verse 17. Then it came to pass when Pharaoh had let the people go that God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. Because God said maybe that people will change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.

Now you need to understand something. If you look at the map of Egypt today, you find the city of Cairo. And then just north of the city of Cairo, you find the city of Alexandria.

And between those two cities, which is a three-hour drive with a vehicle by the way to get there from the one place to another, you find a famous place called the Nile Delta, the seven rivers, the bronzes from the river Nile. And only five is still visible today. The other two are sunken into the ground of the desert.

But that was the place which is called the land of Goshen in the Old Testament. Now the closest and the shortcut into the promised land is all alongside the sea, the Mediterranean Sea from Alexandria, because that was the northern part of the land Goshen where they find themselves in that moment, all alongside the coast into the promised land. And you probably have watched the news over the last couple of weeks and the months because of the war between the Jewish people and the Palestinians.

That was the land of the Philistines. Gaza City and Ashdod and Ashkelon, that was the place, that was the shortcut in how to get into the promised land. But God said that is the place of the Philistines, don't want to go to the shortcut.

But then there was the center road that as I mentioned for you on the screen. You can go all the way down from the land of Goshen towards the Suez Canal, right through in the direction of a place called Taba, and then make your turn towards the left to a place called Karas Barnea. In the book of Deuteronomy chapter one said from Karas Barnea you'll walk for 10-11 days into the promised land, so close.

But God did not took the middle road, the center one. He took the long route down south to the mountain of Waret, because that's what he told Moses. You're going to fetch the people in Egypt, you're going to bring them to this mountain because I want to teach you how to walk with me, how to serve me, and how to worship me.

And from this place after receiving the law and the teachings about the tabernacle and the wilderness, we will make our way into the promised land because I have a purpose for that. And I just want to tell you something tonight very briefly. I have a lot of verses of scripture here and things that I can give you tonight from the Old Testament, but just as introduction because I want us to spend some time in chapter 14 tonight.

God chooses the route of your life. God took me to Poland for a reason. He chose the route in that time, the direction the course of my life.

I was scheduled to be on this trip also in the western parts of Canada for a couple of days and God somehow put uneasiness in my heart and between Henry and myself, it has developed that I will be spending two weeks in this part in Ontario for two weeks instead of flying all the way to the west and from there go back to Australia for the next couple of weeks that I have to go preach about the message of revival. So God plans the route of your life and sometimes it's not what you have in mind. There's no shortcut, there's no middle road, but it's the long road because God had something in mind.

That's all that I want you to see in this moment. The second thing I want you to see as we follow the Lord that God sometimes strengthens your faith for the journey. What do I mean by that? I want you to have a look at that very briefly with me.

Look at that verse 18. In fact, so God led the people around by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea and the children of Israel went unorderly ranks out of the land of Egypt. Some of the translations said in

Afrikaans that they were well equipped when God took them out of the land of Egypt.

So God did not take the shortcut, the middle road, but then God started to strengthen them for the journey that was lying ahead of them by giving them two things. And sometimes on your journey, because we are all in a journey with God, it starts the day that you accept the Lord Jesus as your savior and God takes you through the processes and bring you to a crisis moment of surrender and even beyond that step by step in changing us into the same image of his son the Lord Jesus. And on this journey of life God has well equipped us.

And if you look at that verses of scripture in some of the translations you find that God has taken them out of the land of Egypt and God has blessed them in that moment by providing for them in such a wonderful way by equipping them with all the things that they need by giving them two things. The first one he gave them favor amongst the Egyptian people because just before they left the Egyptians gave them gold and silver and clothing and all the things they would need eventually for the rebuilding or the building of the tabernacle of the wilderness inside the desert. Now you would think tonight that maybe on this journey with God I'm not well equipped for the journey that God has chosen for me on this journey of life, this route that God has in mind for me.

But you are. Let's be very practical tonight. When you accept the Lord Jesus as your savior and Jesus comes to live within your heart in that moment you are well equipped for your journey.

Because Jesus is inside you. God the son in contact with his father and when Jesus left to go back to heaven he sent us another Jesus the Holy Spirit to be in us and to be next to us. We are well equipped for this journey because we have God in us and next to us.

He has given us favor. But you know we as Christian people live as if God is only living up in heaven not inside our hearts. And I share with you already in the last couple of days that even sometimes you don't feel this nearness and this manifest awareness of the presence of God.

But then God gave you a wife. He gave you a husband. He gave you some children.

He gave you some friends and family members to take this journey with you. You can just look at your wife and look at the Lord Jesus himself. Because sometimes the spouse is strong when the other one is weak because of struggle.

You see we are well equipped for our journey. But then God gave us something else. Look at that verse very briefly.

I mentioned that it's the bones of Joseph. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him for he had placed the children of Israel under the solemn oath saying God will surely visit you and you shall carry up my bones from here with you. So what does it mean the bones of Joseph? Can you imagine for a moment after living in the desert in Cairo in slavery for more than 400 years and somehow God sent Moses to bring them out.

And I can just imagine the excitement that was in the air in that moment as they were preparing and as they were packing their bags and putting their luggage together. And somehow as they run down the streets and how God gives them favor and they get gold and silver and food and linen and different kind of things from the Egyptians in that moment. But the excitement we're going to go on a journey.

It's almost like going on vacation. Am I right? When you are younger I remember when you go on vacation you start to pack the bags a couple of days before you travel already. And mama start to prepare the food and the biscuits and the gravy and the stuff and all the things that needs to be prepared a long time and the jams and and all the stuff were put together because there was excitement inside the house.

We're going to go on vacation. Then as you start to drive your vehicle the long road all the way down. The first thing the kids usually ask after a couple of hours of driving how far still because they get tired.

But imagine for a moment leaving Egypt excited but then you walk. And after the first day in the sun in the second day in the sun and the third day in the sun and you look around you just see desert. There's no water there's desert.

It's just stones and rock no trees no grass no no shadow no clouds it's just desert and hot. Many people become discouraged in the journey of God. And I remember even as a Christian many many years ago when you got saved and born again that first couple of days and even weeks it's almost like floating over the air.

Because you just want to tell everybody what God has done for your soul. Then as the time goes by Christian people become discouraged because now there's persecution there's hardships. But God said listen I plan the route of your life I'm going to take you on a journey with me because eventually the purpose is to get into the promised land.

But I have a way of getting there because my job is not just to make you happy and get you to the promised land. My job is to change you into the image of my son the Lord Jesus. That's God's ultimate goal inside the promised land.

So he has a way of getting you there because he knows exactly how you operate what you think your method of doing things and what needs to change in your mind and your heart. He takes you in a different route but he gives you Jesus. He gives you the Holy Spirit and now he tells us he gives us the bones of Joseph.

What does it mean? I think it means a couple of things. First of all I think it means the promises of God. How do I know that? Can you imagine for a moment thousands and thousands of people are walking in the desert and as you're walking in the desert yourself and every now and then when you become discouraged and you look up and the sun is just baking down upon you and it's hot outside and and and it's just when you don't want to just want to go sit down and just do nothing anymore and then you can look to the center of the camp as everybody's walking and there in the center of some place is a donkey.

There on top of the donkey is the body and the bones of Joseph and as I look I see the body and I see the bones I'm reminded of what Joseph said in Genesis chapter 49 and Genesis chapter 50. Listen he said God will surely give attention to this problem because God has promised to Abram, Isaac and Jacob he will go to the promised land and when God started to change that I wanted to take my bones with me. So the bone speaks about what? The promises of God.

But you know a promise means nothing if it's not personal. You see this book the Bible is full of promises but it means nothing if God doesn't take as you spend some time with him a verse of scripture and make it come alive and impress that within your heart that is for you very personal that you can stand upon that promise as if God himself has said that to you yourself. Otherwise this means nothing.

So God speaks about promises and his faithfulness which must become personal. This book is full of that but you see the biggest problem today in South Africa my people one of the biggest problems is our people don't read the Bible anymore. I don't know about you folks in Canada but my people don't read anymore.

So how if you don't read the Bible can God give you a promise? If you find yourself maybe in a difficult spot at the moment in a difficult route of life and you find yourself surrounded with problems and maybe it's time just to stop for a brief moment and just to look at your relationship with the scriptures and the promises of God because God has a word for you in this time of life. But you know the promises is just one way of looking at the bones and I think as I look beyond that I see a couple of other things as well. As I look to the other side and I look at the donkey and I see the casket and I see the body and the bones of Joseph and as I look to that direction I can see people around the donkey and the bones of Moses.

I can see people walking this journey with me. It speaks about the companions that God has given us. Your wife, your father, your mother, your children, your friends, and your family on the same journey of life.

Mentors in the Old Testament, New Testament, friends. That's why I said last night you need to surround yourself with like-minded friends because they are in the same journey with you that you can share your heart and pray together. God has given us companions.

But you know the bones of Joseph speaks about spiritual markers too. What is a spiritual marker? It's a moment of encounter. If you look at your life tonight you will realize there was times in your life where God has spoken to you so clearly and changed the direction of your life.

And as you look back in your life you see there was moments, moments, moments. That becomes spiritual markers. It's like hul hul in the Old Testament, building an altar and some stones and some rock as they cross through the Jordan River.

It's a place you can go back to to see what God has done in your life. Just like He's promised. There's so much information that God has given us in this journey on the bones and the promises that God has in mind for every one of us and the companions and so much more.

And look at the last place in chapter 13 before we get to our message for tonight in chapter 14. God went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light as to go by day and to go by night. So what does this mean? You know if you look at all the commentaries there are many opinions about the pillar of cloud.

Some refer to the Lord Jesus. Some speak about the Word of God that gives light and a lamp unto your feet. Some speak about the Holy Spirit.

But I just want to take a moment tonight and say let's look at this and say the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire speaks about all three of them. Let's take the shortcut because He spoke from the cloud and the Holy Spirit is the one that speaks to us. But at the same time He speaks from the Word, the Bible.

He leads us on a daily basis. He speaks to us. He was the one that was protecting them because He came down from heaven and placed them right in front between the people of Israel and the Egyptian army.

For the people of Israel it was light and for the other party was darkness. There are so many references in the scriptures about this. So God has given us well equipped for the journey by giving us His Son, His Word, His Holy Spirit, companions and promises and so many more things that we can hold on to on this journey that God is taking you here in Canada.

Let's come to chapter 14, the message that I have for you tonight. Look at chapter 14 and I'm just going to give you a couple of points. There are much more.

In fact there is about eight or nine or ten more points but I just want to leave you with three or four points in this evening. But I want you to see this in your mind. Now the Lord spoke to Moses saying speak to the children of Israel that they would turn and camp before Pihachirov between Migdor and the sea opposite Baal Shefon.

You shall camp before it by the sea. What does it mean in your journey with God tonight? What does it mean? You see sometimes as we follow the Lord He brings us to this place where we have to trust Him with a dead end. I want you to see this.

Picture this in your mind. You are walking, there's a pillar of cloud, there's a fire at night, but you're walking in the desert following God because they were following Him. Because you are following God towards your destination, your promised land.

And I was just following the impression of God to go to Poland and to preach the gospel. I was just following Him and He was planning the course of my life and allowing things to happen around it. Finding myself stuck in a dead end in Poland surrounded with planes which is grounded and closed airports and a volcano ashes just flying over us for five or for six days.

But see the people for a moment. If this building tonight is the children of Israel you're facing towards me. So let me turn around and as we look together to the screen that's where they find themselves looking at the Red Sea.

That's the Red Sea. And then the Bible tells us Baal Shefon was to this side of the of the Red Sea. What is Baal Shefon? It was a mountain and on top of the mountain there was a temple, an Egyptian temple.

So there's a mountain and there's the Red Sea and that side was Pihahirov which is also a mountain with a temple on top of that. And from the temple there was a little brook, a river going through. So there's a sea and there's two mountains.

And then there was a city of Migdor this side. And that side was the Egyptian army. 600 chariots, horses and soldiers.

Can you see that? If you close your eyes you see the sea. You see two mountains. You see the city behind you.

You see a thousands of soldiers coming from that side. And God tells Moses the following. He said I want you to tell the people that they need to turn around and camp right here.

Think for a moment what God is saying. God said I want you to turn around and camp right here. Right in the center between two mountains and a sea and a city and soldiers coming your way.

Turn around and camp right here. I want you to see a few things tonight. First of all the people of Israel were exactly at the place where God wanted them to be.

You know we as a family we love to go camping in South Africa. If we make a reservation at the National Parks Board in South Africa then they allow you to to get a spot to put your tent or your trailer or your caravan there. But they don't assign a number to you.

You just ask for maybe a place with a sea view and maybe with an electrical point that you can use instead of gas electricity. So it's approved. We can have a place right in the front and then we can have the perfect sight on the sea and we can have electricity and we can have a wonderful time.

That's the only thing that they approve. But when you get there they will tell you exactly what number has been assigned to you. They choose the place of my staying every month of December for a week or 10 days at the spot that we can spend some time together.

A place called Storm's River. Looking at the whales and the dolphins and walking in the nature. That's where we go and read and sleep.

Now the people of Israel are walking towards the promised land. The place, the purpose that God has initiated from the very beginning. And they make their way towards the promised land and suddenly they find themselves surrounded with problems.

And God said you are exactly where I want you to be at this spot. Let me tell you something tonight. Maybe you had a dream about your marriage, about your family, about your finances, about your business, about your life, about your journey towards the promised land.

And maybe now you find yourself stuck in the desert in a dead end. Then we tend to forget about companions and promises and scripture and the Holy Spirit and the Bible and the Lord Jesus and friends and family members. We are well equipped and we forget about all those things because we find ourselves surrounded with problems.

That's the only thing that we see. We need to realize something tonight. I know nothing about you, but you are tonight exactly where God wants you to be.

You find yourself tonight in a marriage, in a financial crisis, in an issue in your body and your health and your business and your family members exactly where God wants you to be. You know there was a time in the life of Dr. Andrew Murray, I wrote this down, that he became sick. He lost his voice completely.

And at that time as he was traveling to Europe all the way from South Africa and Cape Town with a ship, his wife Emma became sick too. And they were stuck in England. And then they went all the way to Germany to Pastor Blumhart.

You might remember his name and that they might help them to get his voice back because he couldn't preach in that moment. So Andrew Murray was sitting there finding himself in a tight spot. Then he wrote the following.

Let me read that for you. He said, God brought me here. It is by God's will that I find myself in this place.

And in that fact I will rest. So God will keep me here in God's love and give me grace as his child. Then God will make this trial a blessing.

He will teach me the lessons that he wants me to learn. And he will give me the grace he means to bestow. Last in God's good timing he will bring me out again and how and when he knows.

So let me just say, I am here tonight by God's appointment, in God's keeping, in God's training, for God's time and for God's purpose. And for God's glory. Then he started to write books because something was burning within his heart in that moment.

And out of that passion, that burning, that longing to speak to his people in South Africa was the beginning of 240 books that you can still read today, in fact, in South Africa. You know, the other day as I was preaching in South Africa, about three hours away from my home, a lady came to see me about her husband. And she drove all the way to Pretoria where I stay.

And she came to see me three times for counseling sessions. And she became involved in a third party. And we had these discussions and she ended up, you know, breaking off the relationship with the third party and go back to her husband.

But the reason was because her husband, he drinks a bottle of brandy every day. Then when he drinks that bottle of brandy, he will start and he will shout aloud and he will tell everybody tonight, what is he going to do with his wife when he gets back home with that drunken breath and this whole demeanor. And she just got sick and tired of that.

And then she became involved in a third party because she came to see me. She broke off the relationship. She went back to her husband.

One morning at seven o'clock, she phones me. She said, Francois, I cannot take this anymore. Please help me.

He did that again last night. I said, ma'am, can I take you away from your husband for a few days and put you in a place that you can just get perspective? She said, I cannot do that. I said, why not? She said, who will tell my husband about the Lord Jesus? And then she said, I will never forget this in my life.

She said, Francois, I find my exactly at the place where God wants me to be. In the middle of my problems. Because that's where he has put that.

You might find yourself tonight in a difficult spot, maybe a marriage, maybe a family, maybe a husband, maybe a father or a mother, maybe just a difficult business time, maybe an economy crisis. But let me just tell you something tonight. Sometimes in the journey of life, the route that God chooses brings you to a dead end in your life.

And tonight you are exactly where God has put you. We need to start looking at that from his perspective and start to ask the right questions. Let's look at the second point that I put up for you in verse four.

Let's read it again. God said, tell the people they must turn and camp. Then Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they are bewildered by the land.

The wilderness has closed them in. Look at verse four. Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart that he will pursue them.

I will harden Pharaoh's heart that he will pursue them. Second thing I want you to see. Sometimes even in that spot, God is even allowing some more stuff to happen.

You know, one time I was in Israel with a group from South Africa. And the last time that I was there, the wind started to blow. And on the Sea of Galilee, there was suddenly waves coming almost like two meters high.

And I remember I took my Bible and I put inside a plastic bag and left it someplace. And I was standing in the front of that wooden ship and the wind was blowing. And as the waves hit against the boat, we were soaking wet.

But as I was standing in the front like this, I just stood there. I just enjoyed the wind and the weather and the spray of the water. And I was soaking wet.

But as I was standing there, I started to think about the storms of life. The Old Testament speaks about the storms from the life of Jonah. There was a storm in his life because of disobedience.

Am I right? In the New Testament, two storms on the Sea of Galilee. In both cases, there was no disobedience. There were no sin.

One time Jesus was inside the boat. One time Jesus was outside on the mountain praying and looking down at the pen. But both those storms was all because of faith and trust and building the character.

One because of sin, one because of character building. Jesus knew that there will be a storm coming on the Sea of Galilee. And still he sends his disciples to the other side, knowingly there will be a storm.

He knew that. You know, when God called me into the full-time ministry, God knew that in one year I will stand next to the road with a broken vehicle nine times at night in unsafe areas in South Africa. God knew that.

God knew that we as a family will go through an armed robbery. God knew that. God knew all things that will happen when God called me.

When God called Moses, God did not tell Moses there will be a crisis moment at the Red Sea waiting for you. But it was. You see, sometimes life happens and God allows even things beyond that to happen with you in that spot that you find yourself treasure.

Why? You see, life is not just to be about being happy. It's not your best life now that many people preach about in America and South Africa and worldwide, about prosperity and just to be happy and to be successful. That is true.

That's the one side of the coin. But sometimes when you think about Christianity, it's not about being happy. It's about becoming like Jesus.

That's what we know. It's what we become. And how will God change us? How will God teach you faith and trust if God doesn't put you in a place where you have to believe him, even though you cannot see anything? How are you going to learn patience if God doesn't surround you with impatient people? How will you learn how to love people if God doesn't put you in positions and surround you with people which is unkind and and impatient and and hard and criticizing the whole time? They put you right there.

You see what's in your heart. Because his job is to change us to become like his son. So God puts you in places, allows things to happen because he has something in mind.

What is that? Let me close our message tonight with that. There is a few more points. I might just mention that to you.

But look at verse four again. Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart that he will pursue you and then I will gain honor over Pharaoh and all over his army and that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. Let me tell you something.

What was God's goal is to bring glory to himself. God brought them to that place. He's the only one that can take them out there.

When God brings you to a dead end in your life, only God can change that. Not you. I've tried so many times by putting a machine into a sailboat and failed.

Not realizing God has brought me here. You know when I was preaching last month in September in America, South Carolina, I became sick with the cold and then they moved me from the one hotel to another which the air conditioning was different the last two days before I had to go back to South Africa. So I was free the Friday afternoon, the evening, and the Saturday staying in this nice hotel just to rest my body before preaching Sunday morning and Sunday night and then fly back on Monday.

But I remember Saturday afternoon as I was kneeling at the couch that I was staying in the room praying for the meetings on Sunday and just waiting upon the Lord. I received a few emails and one of the emails was a bill from South Africa. One more bill that needs to be paid.

Sick. Some more bills coming in my email. And as I look at that I start to think about Peter walking on the water and how Peter looked at the face of Jesus and how Jesus was the source of his faith and trust and how Jesus said, but the Father is doing all kinds of things through his son the Lord Jesus.

In that moment the Father chose that Peter can walk because of the command that Jesus gave on the water. Because the Son of Man can do nothing, we told you already last night, except what he saw from his Father. So the Father gave permission that the Son can tell Peter, come walk on the water with me.

So as Peter was walking, God did a tremendous miracle. He walked on the water and then as he looked away from Jesus he was sinking. And remember God has given us companions and promises in the Bible and the world and Jesus and the Holy Spirit to look to at this day.

Even though in the dead end things that is happening, look unto Jesus he says. Look at his life. So Peter looked away and he sank.

And Jesus got hold of his hand and he put him in a ship and in that moment I realized something. That when everything that happens in the life of Jesus, he puts his full weight and trust and leaning into the Father. And as I was reflecting upon that receiving the bow when I was sick and down, I walked away to go to the reception from the hotel to get some coffee because they had free coffee in the reception and with nice vanilla flavor inside.

And the one you make in your little room is strong coffee. So I went to the foyer because that's where you get the nice coffee, free of charge. And as I walk towards the lift to go down, God spoke to me.

You know what he said? He said, Francois, this email, this bow you just received is my invitation for you. Ask the right questions, not the wrong ones. But why? Why me? Why now? This is my invitation for you

because I'm working in your life.

There are levels of faith, Francois. There are levels of trust. There are levels of brokenness.

There are levels of obedience. There are levels in going higher and deeper in your work with me. This is my invitation for you to get closer to me.

Do you trust me? And I said, yes, Lord. You see, a dead end is an invitation from God to see what's in your heart and what will you do with that because he's working. And out of that comes something so sweet and so wonderful and so special.

You know what's that? Christlikeness is the only way we can get to that point of becoming like Jesus is where the Father is working in your heart, in your life, through the hardships and the persecution of life. And God will receive the most glory if God can do a miracle because of your faith and because of your trust. And even beyond that, God can receive so much glory and people look at you and look at me and they can see Jesus in us.

The way you speak, the way you behave with your spouse, with your children, with your family members, it's all about Jesus. God said, I brought you to this place. I'm going to allow things to happen because I want to see what's going to get out of this furnace.

God, my son. I can change this now, God says, if I want. But I'm going to leave you right there because that's my purpose.

I want you to become like Jesus. Let me ask you something tonight in closing. I know nothing about you, about your finances, about your business, about your family members, your kids, your grandchildren, but I just want to tell you something.

God's purpose did not change. God's plan to get out of Egypt into the promised land and beyond that is still there. The place is waiting where we can read the scriptures and be comforted and to deal with the issues of the dust and the shoes and so many other things and believe in Him that He can change your name.

And then He takes you on a journey and He will choose places where you have to go because He has something in mind. As He has chosen me to go to Poland for a reason. And when I look back at that today, you know, I've been there four times now in the last four years.

The second time I flew to Warsaw in Poland the year following that in 2011, they surprised me because they took the one book that I wrote about revival back in South Africa and they published that in the Polish language. And when I got there, they showed me the copies of that book in Poland, sent to all the churches all over Poland. The second book is published now about spiritual breathing that I wrote.

And as I was preaching there, I realized what God has done. Last year when I was there, there was a hundred leaders coming from seven nations around Poland together just to listen two days about prayer and revival. Next year in March, I'll be speaking in Prague in Czech Republic for 200 pastors on prayer and revival.

They just sent me an email the other day and said they've published a book in the Czech Republic language, the one book on revival. You see, when I look back in my life at the moment, I realize God has

taken me to Poland. He planned the route of my life.

He's given me the promises, the scriptures, the companions to go with me the whole time because God was thinking about two things. The first thing that he was thinking about was teaching me the lessons of faith. But secondly, using that to bring blessing to people in Poland.

So before I came tonight, I received a text message through Skype from a man in Poland tonight. He said, Francois, I spent three hours today with a Christian family that attended the conference last year when you were preaching, and I want to tell you something. He said, those people are still doing what you told them last year about quiet time daily.

You see, the journey of life touches the life of so many people, and sometimes you end up in the dead end. But it's time to ask the right question. But why? Why me? Why now? Lord, what are you doing? What are you saying? What do you want to accomplish in me? And how can I join you? And how can I work with you? Because this is your invitation for me to see a miracle in my life.

I want to close. My time is finished. There's a young man, his name, there is some other points also in chapter 14, but there was a young man, his name was Joseph Kemp, and I want to close with that tonight.

His father was a policeman. He died when Joseph was only seven years old. He drowned in a river in Scotland.

Two years later, his mother died. He had six siblings, sisters, and they were all put in seven different homes. That's where he grew up as an orphan.

A man came along one time in a place called Howell in Yorkshire, gave him a Bible. He wrote in front of the Bible, for Joseph Kemp, he said, every day you must pray. He said, Lord, take my heart and give me thy Holy Spirit.

So Joseph, as he opens the Bible as a young boy, he read that every time. He said, Lord, take my heart and give me thy Holy Spirit. Sometime later, he met a sailor boy that led him to the Lord Jesus, and then he attended a conference.

But before he attended the conference, he read a book from William McKay about grace and truth. Then he came to a conference, and there was a man preaching. His name was Graeme Scroggie, a Scottish preacher, a Keswick speaker.

He was only 16 years old, Joseph Kemp, and he preached a message called, Be ye separate from the world. He understood the message and surrendered, and he went to the Bible school to become a pastor. And then they called him to become the pastor of Rose Street, Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh, as a young boy, as a young pastor.

That chapel had more than 200 members on a Sunday morning. The last pastor was a disaster. Sunday morning, it dwindled down to 40 members on a Sunday morning, and eight on a Sunday night, and nobody at the prayer meetings on Wednesday night.

But there was a man inside. He was an elder. His name is Colin Uruguat.

By that time, the elders and the deacons received an offer from a local company, we want to buy this church building to make it a storehouse. And Colin Uruguat said, let's give God one more chance, and we

sell the building. And as he was praying one day, Colin said God met with him.

One Sunday morning, as he walked down to the church with his boy, he said to his son, he said, son, look around you and see the crowds of people. He said, dad, there's nobody around us. He said, my son, look, see the crowds of people in the streets, making their way towards the church, saved and born again.

Look, see. He said, dad, there's no one. He said, son, look and see the people making their way towards the church, saved and born again.

Then they called Joseph Kent, a young boy that has asthma problems, sick. And he started to preach on Sunday morning, and people started to get back, a few of them. After a couple of months in the church, he became sick, and they sent him away to Keswick to go rest at the lakes in England, because he was sick.

And as he was at Keswick conference in that moment, there was a conference running, and Scroggie was preaching, but then there was a speaker from South Africa. His name is Dr. Andrew Murray. His voice came back, and he preached, and our prayer.

And in the meeting, he stopped, and he looked at the people. He looked at them with those eyes that were burning, and he shouted them, wanted men that can pray. And Joseph Kent said, that's the only thing I remember from that conference, a man standing in front of me, shouting at me with eyes that was burning, saying, wanted, God want people that can pray.

He went back. He started his quiet time in the morning. He started a prayer meeting on Sunday morning before the church started to preach.

He started prayer meeting on Sunday night before the evening session. It doesn't mean much for you and I, because we have vehicles, but he had to walk a mile to church every Sunday morning, and every Sunday night, and a mile back. He walked two miles in the morning, and two miles in the afternoon, walking as a sick man, but praying before he preached.

People started to pray with him, two people here, four people there. Then he started to come. He started to open some more times on Sunday.

He opened up four times of prayer on a Sunday, walking four times to church, praying. Then he started to pray on Monday nights, opened up for the church for people to come, and Tuesday night, and Wednesday night, every night of the week, it was open for prayer. A sick boy, whose father died when he was seven.

God took him on a journey. He had no family, and he was sick, but God sent him companions. A man that gave him a Bible, a sailor boy that led him to the Lord Jesus, a book that he was reading about grace and truth, a conference, biggish, separate.

He sent him to another conference to listen to a speaker. You see, God sent us companions on a journey. I was standing in Rose Street in Charlotte Chapel two times in my life.

One time I was in the archives of that church, and I hold the minutes of that church of 1905 in my hands. I look at the messages that Joseph came to preach every Sunday, and the minutes, and all the handouts he gave to the people. You know, that church sent out more than 200 missionaries.

There was a Jesus Mass every month in Edinburgh. The church exploded to hundreds, and hundreds, and hundreds of people, all because of a sick boy, and because of a man that God sent all the way from South

Africa, cutting the root of his life, to preach one message. How will you know tonight, in the next few days, that your dead end, your crisis moment, your hardship, your persecution, your difficult marriage, and family, and business, the outcome of that will be a revival in you, if you don't take time to process God's invitation.

The dead end is God's invitation, because He's doing something in your life. He wants to do a miracle. How long will God have to wait for you before you will see a miracle in your life? It will get even worse.

Manly Beasley said one time in his life, God gave him a promise. He said, Manly, you will see your grandchildren. Then he became sick.

He became even worse. He was lying in the hospital, dying. And the doctor said, he's going to die.

You must get the family to say goodbye. And Manly just looked up and said, God has given me a promise. I will see my grandchildren.

He left the hospital. Sometimes things become worse, but God can change that. Where do you find yourself tonight? Maybe like Andrew Murray said, I find myself here by God's appointment, in God's keeping, under God's training, for God's purpose, and for God's glory.

How long will you stay in the dead end? As long as it takes, God says, because I have brought you here. Only I can take you out of here. Maybe it's time for us to start to reflect upon the storms of life, because maybe your storm is all because of disobedience like Jonah, or maybe it's because of the building of your character, your faith, your trust, but out of it comes the wonder and the beauty and the sweetness of Jesus himself.

Let us pray together. Maybe it's time for us to become honest. You know, sometimes when the difficulties of life comes our way, the purification of our faith, the trials of faith, as Muller used to say, that there was a time that they were depending upon God daily for every meal.

Then sometimes there was extras, but sometimes the trial of faith that builds our trust. And maybe tonight when you look at your own life, maybe you find yourself in this dead end, this spot of bother, this hardship, this sickness, this storm, maybe because of disobedience, or maybe God is trying to get your attention. But you can realize, like I've realized as I walk down in an hotel room to pick up a cup of coffee, that even a bowl that God sends our way is God's invitation.

By just telling us the finances, He's already there in heaven, and I'm just getting your attention that you can pray and trust me for that, that I can even send that your way to pay the bill, because I have allowed this to happen. Only I can take it away, so that Pharaoh and you can know that I am the Lord. And oh Father, as we think about Elijah so many times, and as he was standing on that mountain praying, he said, Lord, that thou would hear of my prayer, that the people might know that you are the Lord.

And as we look around us today and we see the great falling away in Canada, in America, South Africa, we see the empty churches, Lord. We see the people falling away, and Lord, how they doubt and how they start to reason and to justify that there is no God. And Lord, as we look around us and we see that, you allow us, Lord, to go in a different direction, because you want us to get to that point of realizing it's only God that can bring us back.

And Father, I pray tonight that you would help us even as we leave and even tonight as we go back home. Lord, in a difficult marriage or a family or a business or a financial position that might not be sound tonight, causing a lot of stress and friction in discussions and relationships and so many things, Lord, that you would help us to take a moment realizing you have allowed this to happen. And we find ourselves tonight exactly at the spot that you want us to be.

And you want us to look back and realize you plan the route of our lives. Lord, you have well equipped us for the journey. You have given us the bones of Joseph, the promises, the friends, the spiritual marker.

You have given us the Holy Spirit. You've given us the Bible, the Word of God. You have given us the Lord Jesus himself on this journey.

It's time, Lord, for us not to be like Peter looking away from Jesus as the source and as the object of our faith, but to look unto him and the Father as the only source and object of our faith and trust him that he will accomplish within us what only he can do. That's the ultimate change into the image and the likeness of his Son, the Lord Jesus, in helping us, Lord, to become like him. In Jesus' name, I pray.

Amen. Before we will be singing together, I want to share just something with you that we can take that back home. A few years ago when I was preaching in Tennessee, I found that Dr. Dennis Kinlow was not too far away from there, about a four-hour drive in Wilmore, Kentucky.

So, we drove all the way there and we spent some time. He gave me 30 or 40 minutes of his time. I don't remember the amount, but we ended up spending about four hours together.

We drove all the way back. He spoke about four or five Hebrew words in the Old Testament, the old time. As I was about to leave, he prayed for me and then he gave me a verse of Scripture.

I want to leave you with that verse of Scripture tonight. He said, Francis, when you leave this place today, I want you to live with John chapter 17, verse 18 in your heart. Go back home and live with that.

Go think about that verse and live with that. You know what the verse is saying? When Jesus said, when he prayed for his disciples, he said, Father, just as you have sent me, so now I send them. Just as my Father sent me, so I send you, Jesus said.

Then he said the following. He said, Go and be Jesus. I said, Sir, does it mean I have to be Jesus? He said, Yes.

Everything that Jesus Christ means to you tonight, if it's your salvation, if it's your forgiveness for sin, if he has to take you by the hand and go the second mile with you, if he has to be patient and kind and forgiving, everything that Jesus Christ means to you tonight, everything, everything, go and be that for him where he has placed you, beginning with your marriage tonight, your family members tonight, your colleagues tomorrow at work tomorrow. Go and be Jesus. Just as the Father has sent me, so I send you to be me.

And how will you be like Jesus if Jesus doesn't take you to places where he takes out everything inside which is not like him so that you can be him? For that difficult wife that you are married with, that husband, that father, that mother, because that's the ultimate glory that you will receive to see where he has put you to become like him, because that's what Christianity is all about. It's not just about the promised land, happiness, joy, success, finances. It's about becoming like him.

So as my Father sent me, so I send you to my desires. Go and be me tonight. If he can forgive, you can forgive.

You can forgive tonight your husband, your wife, your father, your mother, your brother, your sister tonight. You can. If he can pray, you can pray.

If he can live a holy life, so can you. If you can go the second mile, so can you. If he can make time for you, so can you, because he has well equipped us for this journey to be his example in this world.

And may God help you in doing so tonight. Thank you, Andrew.

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