

Joshua (Part 4)

by Richard Siple

The sermon emphasizes the importance of stepping out in faith and obedience to God, trusting in His character and guidance.

Duration: 50:54

Scripture: Ephesians 2:10, Ephesians 4:1, Ephesians 4:17, Colossians 4:5, 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 1 John 1:7, 1 John 2:6

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story about how his congregation built an education building in Miami in just nine months, without incurring any debt. He emphasizes the importance of taking steps of faith and trusting God's guidance in order to accomplish what He wants us to do. The speaker also references the story of Joshua and the walls of Jericho, highlighting the perseverance and obedience required to see God's promises fulfilled. He encourages the audience to take the first step in doing what God wants them to do, even if they feel afraid or uncertain.

Transcript

If I am willing to get my feet wet obeying God, God will keep me from drowning. You need to really get that one. If I am willing to get my feet wet obeying God, God will keep me from drowning.

After all, it's not about me, it's about God. I don't have much at stake. I am confident that when I pass off this scene, there will only be, you know, a few people who will feel sorry that I'm gone, and the rest will say it's a good thing he went to heaven, we're getting a little tired of him anyway.

I have very little at stake. But God has his character at stake. Sometimes when people are having a problem about the assurance of their salvation, they are concerned because of their own feelings, or their own experiences, or their own lack of experiences, or some such thing.

My friends, it's not about you, it's about God. Did you hear? It's not about you, it's about God. He's the Savior.

Jesus Christ is the Savior, not you. And your salvation is dependent on Him, and on His trustworthiness, and His truthfulness, and His reliability, and His everlasting, eternal, infallible character. Amen? So I want you to get that.

And if you're willing to get your feet wet for God, He will keep you from drowning, because His character is at stake. God told Joshua, I love this verse, I've sort of had it for years. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you.

So, every place that you're willing to step out and put your feet on it, God says, you know, if God says, go there, and you obey Him, and you believe Him, and you step out and you put your feet on it, God says, I've given it to you, it's yours, take it. It's not that you have to be responsible for taking it, all you have to do is be responsible for walking. You just have to take the next step.

And as you take the next step, God is there. In fact, He's there ahead of you, and He says, it's yours. Walking with God is a step-by-step process.

I can remember as a young Christian, when I really wanted to believe that I could get it all taken care of in a few minutes somewhere at an altar. You know, I wanted to get done with it. You understand what I mean? I wanted to get done with struggling with my self-life.

I wanted to get done with struggling with the flesh. I wanted to get done with my own weakness and my own failures, and I wanted to have something happen that would make me, everything that I wanted to be and everything God wanted me to be overnight, and it'd be nice and easy from there on. And God said, it doesn't work like that.

It is a step-by-step process. There are crises in the Christian life. There are times when we take big steps for God.

Amen? And He does wonderful things in our lives. And He saves us. He fills us.

He does wonderful things at various times in our lives, and those crises are important. But by and large, Christian life is a step-by-step process. It's taking the next step with God.

The Scriptures are really just filled with this, and what I did, I took just a few statements out of the New Testament, and I'm not even going to give you the references. I'm going to read down through them, so listen carefully. I want you to just get the feel for this truth of the Christian life.

So here we go. We also should walk in newness of life. Let us walk properly as in the day, for we walk by faith and not by sight.

But I say, walk in the Spirit. We are created in Christ Jesus on two good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. I entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you've been called.

This I say, then, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles walk. That is, we don't walk like the world. Walk in love.

Walk as children of light. Be careful how you walk. These are all Scripture references.

So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. As you have received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk in him. Walk in wisdom toward those who are without.

Walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom. You received instructions from us as to how you ought to walk. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another in

the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son keeps on continually cleansing us from every sin.

We're talking about walking. The one who says that he abides in him that is in Christ, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked. Are you getting the point? And finally, when we stand before him in heaven, it says that we will walk with him in white.

I don't know what we're going to do after, you know, it's all over and we're in eternity with him, but I'm kind of excited thinking about it sometime, just imagining what we might be doing. We're going to walk with him in white. Now, our Scripture this morning, we've already read, but I want to read some of it to you again from Joshua.

Please open your Bibles to Joshua chapter 3 and verse 8. And then I'm just going to read that first one because we've already read verses 14 to 17. So Joshua 3, 8, but keep your Bible open to Joshua now for the rest of the message. Give these instructions to the priests who are carrying the Ark of the Covenant.

When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop. Now, the Jordan River was at flood tide. It was overflowing all its banks.

It was rushing along. It was wide, it was deep, and it was in a hurry. And to walk out into that river meant to drown.

But they had to get across that river to get to Jericho and to conquer that city and move through the pass to the land of Canaan. There they were. And how are they going to do it? Well, the Ark of the Covenant, of course, was the most sacred thing that they had.

And when it was in the tabernacle all set up, the glory of God would come down and hover over the mercy seat, and the blood was offered there for atonement for the sins of the people. I mean, this was a very sacred object. And they were to take this and they were to precede these three million people and to march toward the Jordan River with all these people coming behind them.

I've often wondered what went through their minds. Oh, God, you better come through. Man, look at that water.

It's roaring. What will happen if we step out in there with this ark and it sweeps us away and the Ark of God goes rushing down the Jordan River and it's gone and God's presence leaves us? I'm sorry that I imitated some of you. Well, I've stepped in a lot of waters and I haven't drowned yet.

And so have some of you, amen? So God said, I want you to do something. You see, when they crossed the Red Sea, God said to Moses, stretch out your rod. So he stretched out his rod and God sent a wind and it blew all night and it made a path right through the Red Sea.

So the waters were piled up on both sides. I often wondered what it looked like. I wonder when they walked through there if they could see the fish swimming over on the... I don't know.

But there it was, and they all went through on dry ground. But God says, now I want to take you a little deeper. Now that represented their salvation.

Now this represents their sanctification. You like that word? That's a good word. They're going to go in now and they're going farther with God.

And so God says, now this time, you know, I could do that. I could have, you know, the rod that budded, Aaron's rod that budded, it was in there. You could take out the rod and hold it over the river.

You know, it could have had the same effect. But God said, no, this time you're going to walk into the river. You're going to get your feet wet.

And that is a major problem for God's people. They're afraid to get their feet wet. And God is always saying to us, what I want you to do is to step out and trust me and get your feet wet and then watch me move in.

And meet the need. And I don't know what God is asking you to do. I don't know what it is that he wants in your life right now.

I could guess for some of you. Let me take this guess. There's someone listening to me and all your Christian life, you have had all kinds of friends out in the world.

You know, all kinds of people and they like you. You're a nice person. They like you.

You work with them. You associate with them and all. Some of them even know you're a Christian.

You go to church. But in all those years, you have never witnessed to anyone directly about Jesus Christ and the good news that he died for sinners and that they could be saved and offered them an opportunity to pray to receive Christ. And you've never done it even once in your life.

And you're scared to death to do it. And God is saying to you, I want you to step into the water. I want you to get your feet wet.

You say, oh, Lord, I won't know what to do. I'll drown. Well, for some of us, it might be better if we did.

You won't drown. No. Try it.

Try it. What have you got to lose? Very little. God has his character to lose.

I'll tell you what. If some of you would try it this week, you'd come back here next Sunday on cloud nine bringing a brand new Christian with you that you had prayed with and led to Jesus. Don't you think God wants to save those people out there in this city? Don't you think he wants to save the people that you know that are neighbors and friends and work associates and all kinds of people because he loves them.

He loves them. He died for them. And he's saying, some of you need to get your feet wet.

Open your mouth. You say, I'll put my foot in it. That's fine.

You can pull it back out and say, let me tell you what Jesus did for me. That's all you have to tell him. See, some of you are getting chills already feeling how cold the water will be.

But I'll tell you what, after a while, you'll get to the point where you can just jump in and it won't bother you at all. When you were a kid, remember, when you took the first swim in the summer and the water felt so cold and you jumped in and you nearly froze but you fool around and play around in it for a while. After a while, it doesn't even feel cold.

So, you'll get to the point where it doesn't even scare you anymore to get your feet wet. Now, the first thing we need to do is God-directed feet. God said, give instructions to the priests.

When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop. We need God's direction. We need to have God leading us and God directing us.

You know, we need God leading us in our entire life. Not just in our spiritual ministries but in all of our life, we need God leading us. When I was a pastor in Akron, Ohio, there was a man that started coming to our church, he and his family, about the same time that I came there as pastor.

His name was Dave Ray and he wouldn't mind me using his name. He had been saved in a home Bible study. He had been an alcoholic for 21 years but he was one of those kind of alcoholics that drank every day and worked every day and made a good living.

When he went on a holiday, he came up to Canada with some of his buddies ostensibly to go fishing and for 10 days they sat on the lakes and drank until it's a wonder they didn't all drown. And he came back and went to work. He worked in a dry goods company and he handled, he was a salesman for gaskets.

Now it sounds very boring to me but he sold gaskets for this company of all sizes and descriptions and he knew all about gaskets. But he was a salesman who sat in an office and used his phone and worked eight hours, five days a week, made a good living and drank continually. And God saved him in a home Bible study and delivered him from drink.

And about that time he came to our church. God touched him in a communion service and healed his back and he got on fire for God. And God said to him, I want you to start a business for me because I want to bless you and I want you to make money to use for my kingdom.

Well he didn't have any money. So he went out and he mortgaged his home and borrowed \$10,000 and began cutting gaskets with a hand operated cutter. And he had one man to help him.

And away he went. It was fascinating to watch this business. I've had lots of fun watching men do things like this over the years.

And we would pray together about it. He came to me first when he thought God was leading him. And his home was paid for but he decided to take out the mortgage and away he went.

We'd pray together about every step. I didn't know anything about it. I didn't know anything about profits or what he should charge or anything.

So we'd pray and God would tell him. Well God started doing all kinds of things. I still remember the day that he called me and said you've got to come over.

I've just had a miracle happen. So I went over and he said a man came in and talked to me from the federal government today. I said are you in trouble with your taxes? He said no.

He said he'd come in to talk to me about business. Well I said you've just got a little bitty business. He said I know it but I've got lots of room.

And he said he wants me to make gaskets for nuclear reactors for the United States government. And they will pay me \$37,000 a piece for them. Well that's pretty good.

And they will supply the material. And I still remember going in there and seeing this huge pieces of material laid out on the floor. And he designed it and got down on his hands and knees and cut the things out.

And they paid him \$37,000 a piece. That gave his business a lift. I saw the gaskets and I saw that thing go until that business was running three shifts and the only time it shut down was on Sunday.

You say what did he do with the money? He lived in the same house. He still lives in the same house. He's retired now and I visited him the last time I was in Akron and he still lives in the same house and drives an old car and hasn't changed his way of living one bit.

I remember a time when he was supporting 15 children in the Christian school that were not his children because their parents couldn't afford to pay for it. And God poured the money through his hands and you know what else? He started to be a soul winner and he had a little book that he carried in his pocket and he had more appointments in it than I did. And constantly led people to Jesus Christ right there in his business office.

Now he's retired and his sons have taken over and he is working full time for the Lord. He was willing to get his feet wet. He was willing to step into the water get his feet wet for God and God came through.

Then we must have cleansed feet. Joshua told the people in Joshua 3, 5. Then Joshua told the people purify yourselves for tomorrow the Lord will do great wonders among you. Jesus said a person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet his whole body is clean.

You remember when Jesus was washing the disciples feet and Peter said you'll never wash my feet and he said if I don't wash your feet you have no part with me. He said well then wash me all over and he said no. If you've been washed you just need to have your feet cleaned.

And Christians have been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ and we sang this morning not in part but the whole. He's nailed my sin to the cross not in part but the whole. Yes, all of our sins have been nailed to the cross and all of it's taken away.

We don't need a new bath but we do need to get our feet cleansed. Our daily walk cleansed because sometimes we do things displeasing to God, right? And if we confess our sins he is faithful and just and he saves us from all unrighteousness. So there is a need sometimes when we begin to step out for God there's a need to have our feet cleansed our walk cleansed in the blood of Jesus and to get things right with God.

Listen to an incident related by Jim Cimbala. An attractive young couple whom I will call Michelle and Steve came forward for prayer at the end of a Sunday service. When I asked he in an expensive suit and \$60 silk tie she in a fashionable dress.

I could tell by the moisture in her eyes that something had touched her during the service. By contrast he seemed to hold back just a step not looking me in the eye. Would you please pray for us she asked.

Certainly I said. What would you like me to pray about? That God will bless our relationship did you get that? That God will bless our relationship. That line can mean anything especially in New York City.

I felt prompted to ask a few more questions. Before I pray help me with a little background if you will. How long have you known each other? A couple of years.

Next question wasn't exactly polite but I felt the spirit nudging me so without the slightest change of my voice level or inflection I said are you living together? The shock was instantaneous. Her eyelashes blinked his head snapped up. We stood there frozen for a second staring at each other.

Finally she answered well yes we are. I nodded then said okay that puts me in sort of a bind. You want me to ask God to bless something that he has already expressed his opinion about.

He's already made it clear in the Bible that living together is not a good idea. So it looks to me like I'd be wasting everybody's time to ask his help in this situation wouldn't I? They just stared at me. Would he? Yes.

How could you ask God to bless something God has said he doesn't bless? Amen? Amen? Where are you? There's no way you can make that right. I don't care what the world does. Steve how about you finding another place to live right now? You say you want God's best for your relationship.

Okay this is step number one. This will open the door for many other good things. I could tell Steve wasn't thrilled with the idea.

Do you have family or friends in the city where you can stay tonight? No he couldn't think of anyone. Jim would not let him off the hook that easily. Listen we can get you a place to stay.

But if you truly want his help in your life then go his way. Otherwise do whatever you like. Of course it will destroy you in the end.

You can't change God's consequences any more than you can change the law of gravity. He mumbled another excuse. I called one of the lay helpers over and requested that Steve be provided with a bed for the night.

Good for you Steve. Jim. Steve and Michelle still weren't sure.

What about if we stay where we are but just don't sleep together? Ha ha ha. That would be alright wouldn't it? I replied if you both profess to be Christians you have to avoid the obvious physical temptation. Besides when you walk out of your apartment in the morning what would a neighbor logically assume? Do this thing right all the way.

Okay. And praise God they finally agreed and started to move in the direction of getting their life straightened out. I remember getting a call one morning from it was a Monday morning and I got a call from a young housewife, homemaker and she said we were in your service last night.

My husband and I. I said great. I didn't get to meet you and she said we need to talk with you about something. Oh I said alright.

She said recently we were in a home Bible study just last week and we both received Christ as our Savior. I said that's wonderful. She said we asked where we should start going to church and someone suggested we should start at your church so we came Sunday night.

I said wonderful. She said you preached on adultery which is a good subject and I said you are so quiet sometimes. They said oh don't do that tiptoe around don't offend people you know.

The offense of the cross has ceased you know as Paul said. And so she said well she said we think after being there Sunday night we need to talk to you about an appointment. I had no idea what was happening.

They came in and sat down but as they started to talk and they already had two children as they started to talk the Holy Spirit nudged me and I said are you two just living together and not married? And they both at the same time said yes. I said is it wrong? And they both said yes. When did you decide it was wrong? After we received Christ you say what happened? Well we did the same thing.

I've always done that. We got a place for him to stay. He wanted to try the same thing.

He said well you know we have these children and everything and they've been living together a long time and he said we have a big house. He was a carpenter and he said I still have the beautiful bookcases he made for me later. Wonderful carpenter.

And he said we have this big house lots of room in it. He said I can sleep in one bedroom she can sleep in another and the kids are all taken care of and said Baloney who are you kidding? You're not kidding me. I haven't married in a while myself you're not kidding me.

And so we got a place for him to live and he moved out and went and lived with a young man in the church for the next two months and they got their lives straight with God and then we had a wedding and they're living for God today and every time I go back to that church I get to see them and they're walking with God and they're active in the church and living for the Lord. Amen? You see if you're going to walk with God you need to get your feet cleansed. If they're dirty get them washed so you can begin to walk with God.

The Christians who cross the river of difficulty you say goodness I don't think you're going to get done with this sermon I don't think so either but just relax I'll quit when the time comes. I'll let you have your dinner because it'd be awful if you didn't get it. The Christians who cross the river of difficulty are the ones who get their feet wet.

Step into the waters Faith is spelled R-I-S-K Living faith means action. If you read Hebrews 12 if you read before that Hebrews 11 you will find in every case that faith is action. Right? That's right.

Remember when Jesus was in the synagogue and there was a man there with a withered hand and the Pharisees were watching him it's not right to practice medicine on the Sabbath. So let's see if he'll heal this person on the Sabbath then we can accuse him of working on the Sabbath. Hypocrites.

Remember what Jesus did? He didn't go touch the man. The man had a withered hand. He didn't go touch him.

Remember what he did? He said to the man come up here. You know it'd be just like out of the service if I said come up here. So the man came up in front of the crowd and he said stretch out your hand.

He couldn't. It was withered. He said stretch out your hand.

You know what? Suddenly he could. And it came out. And it was healed.

He was healed. Isn't that great? Jesus looked around on them with anger because of the hardness of their hearts. But you see this man had to step into the water.

You remember the 10 lepers that came to him to be healed? And he said go and go through the sacrifices and cleansing rituals that Moses commanded for people with leprosy. And you'll be healed. And so they had to go and go through the rituals.

They were supposed to go through the rituals that you went through after you were healed. So they in effect said okay if you say so we believe you. And they took off.

You remember what happened? As soon as they started off to go and do it God healed them all. It's wonderful. They had to step into the water.

Only one came back to thank him. But they all got healed as soon as they as they stepped out. Did what God said.

Remember the blind man? The pool of Siloam? And Jesus took the dirt spit in the dirt made some clay put it on his eyes and said go and wash. He had to step he had to literally go get in the water. He had to go and sit down by the pool and wash the stuff off from his eyes.

Can't you see him? He'd been blind for years and years and years. And now he's sitting there and he's washing the stuff off and suddenly he can see the water and he keeps getting the water and washing the clay off and now he can see the water clearly and suddenly he can see the people that have gathered around him. And he stands up and he can see.

Wow. I was in a meeting one night where we prayed for two different people with eye problems. The treasurer was a woman and she couldn't count the money any longer because she was almost blind and God healed her and she counted the money that night which was a good thing.

I needed the offering anyway. The pastor he had a terrible problem with his eyes and he took off his glasses and he could read all the gospel signs around on the inside of their little hall. You believe God? So he went and washed and he came seeing.

Feeding the five thousand is the one that blows my mind. Doesn't that really just... You know? Jesus said you know he came and he said Lord, Lord send them away. They're fainting with hunger.

They need to go into the villages and buy food and get something to eat. They're going to starve out here and they're going to collapse and we're going to have a terrible mess in our hands. And Jesus said you don't need to send them away Us? There are thousands of them.

There are thousands of them. He says well what do you have? And they said well we have five loaves and two fish. Probably a couple of fish that have been dried and were edible and little those little loaves of bread not big ones.

Not even enough for the disciples actually. And Jesus took them and broke them up and blessed them and said now have the people sit down in groups of 50. Get them all organized have them sit down in groups of 50 and then you take this bread and fish and pass it out.

Now that does I don't know if that strikes you as strange. It does me. I mean I've tried to picture myself there with one of these baskets with a little piece of bread like that in it and a little sliver of fish and I'm

going to start out.

Can't you see some of the disciples looking at him like you've got to be kidding. I can just see Peter saying well what are you waiting for. Pass it out.

Oh talk about stepping in the water. And the 12 disciples took those little scraps and started out. I mean they have 5,000 men besides women and children.

I have no idea how many people were really there. 15,000 probably. And here they are and they're starting out with this nothing.

They got them all seated and organized and now they're starting out. That's stepping in the water brother. Whoa that's getting your feet wet.

What happened? I don't know how it worked. God came through and I mean that multiplied and multiplied and multiplied and they kept going and going and going and going and they fed all those thousands of people and everybody had all they want and Jesus said now don't waste it and they picked up 12 baskets of fragments left over. I love it.

And Peter the great fisherman been out all night didn't get anything. He knew all about fishing. I can just see him saying yeah well you know all about preaching but believe me I know all about fishing.

You go preach and let me fish. Jesus says cast your nets on the other side of the boat. Let's go out again.

So they went out again cast on the other and they and the boat started to sink with the fish and they had to call for their partners and fill their boat. Getting their feet wet. I suppose the worst one in the Bible was Lazarus when he had been dead and buried four days and Jesus said take away the stone.

And they argued about that. Said Lord he's been dead four days his body started to decay it would smell bad you can't be serious and Jesus said take away the stone. Didn't I say if you would believe you would see the glory of God.

So they took away the stone. So we need to be willing to get our feet wet for God. Well we need worshiping feet and I'm not going to deal with that one.

You can skip over it. Put anything in there you like. He had to take off his shoes the same as Moses.

We need an awe and reverence at the presence of the Lord in our life. The captain of the Lord's host was there and he said Joshua I'm in charge and you say yes sir and the Lord is in charge. You understand that don't you? And then we need persistent feet.

Joshua 6 2 to 5 let me read it. And the Lord said to Joshua see I have given Jericho into your hand with its king and the valiant warriors and you shall march around the city all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days.

Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of ram's horns before the ark. Then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times and the priests shall blow the trumpets and it shall be that when they make a loud blast with a ram's horn and when you hear the sound of the trumpets all the people shall shout with a great shout and the wall of the city will fall down flat and the people will go up every man straight ahead. Persistent feet.

We need to persist in taking the next steps that God wants us to take. We need to do it when it doesn't even seem to make sense. You know I have no idea what went through the minds of those people.

Can you just see them marching around this city all the way around once and then they encamp for the night and then Joshua says do it again so they march around again they encamp for the night and then they do it again they march around again and they encamp for the night. Now we've done this three times we're getting tired of it same wall same people same situation but they do it the fourth time and I can just see some people after the fourth time saying come on what are we doing?

Joshua says never mind do it again so they do it the fifth time and now they're really getting tired of it and Joshua says no God said do it seven days so do it again so they march around the sixth day now on the seventh day they think oh man we've only got to do this one more time he says no on the seventh day they got up at dawn it says that's what it says and they went out and they marched around seven times that day this is getting old and sometimes there are things that God wants us to do and He wants us to step out and trust Him and obey Him and believe Him and do what He wants us to do and walk where He wants us to walk and be what He wants us to be and sometimes it doesn't seem we're getting anywhere and it doesn't seem like anything is happening and it's getting boring and old

and tiresome and we wonder why we're still doing it and the reason we're doing it is because God said to do it and so we keep doing it and believe in God and I tell you the seventh time around they must have been exhausted they must have been really exhausted and the seventh time around priests blew on the horns and they all gave a shout what do you know it happened like God said the wall fell down and they went straight in and took the city so persistent feet I was pastor of a little church in Lake Worth, Florida when I went there we had 36 people in one year we grew to 90 people we didn't have any money but our former building was old we had a couple in the church that were Mormons God cured them of that at that point they weren't really cured yet he had been a builder all his life he

was 73 and you know that's really old and he said God wants us to build the education building we needed to build a Sunday school building we had no Sunday school rooms no room for anything and we were going to build a two-story Christian education building and we were going to remodel the auditorium outside and in and we didn't have any money at all so we devised a pray-as-you-go plan now this was a small church where we could actually do this so we had a pray-as-you-go plan so I would come before the congregation and I would say this week we need concrete and we need this much of it and it's going to cost us this much and then we'd pray and believe God for that and we'd get the money then we'd go buy that man I've mixed a lot of concrete in my time by hand in the heat in Florida down

not far from from Miami and it's hot it was summer and we went to work at it so each thing we needed we would go to the congregation and we would say we need it then we would pray then we'd take an offering then we'd get the money then we'd go buy the stuff and we built the whole education building in nine months debt-free that's what I call a pray-as-you-go plan that is step-by-step step-by-step I walk with Jesus you take this step then God gives you another step and you take the next step then you trust Him and you take the next step and there's some of you here this morning you know perfectly well what God wants you to do and you're afraid to take the first step take the first step get started doing what God wants you to do Dr.

Simpson wrote it's so sweet to walk with Jesus step-by-step and day-by-day stepping in His very footprints walking with Him all the way it's so safe to walk with Jesus leaning hard upon His arm following closely

where He leads us none can hurt and naught can harm step-by-step I walk with Jesus just a moment at a time heights I have not wings to soar to step-by-step my feet can climb Amen Amen victorious feet they had the victory God gave them the victory they went in I want to close with a story by Ben Patterson he tells about taking a step on the mountain when the next step could mean death he says in 1988 three friends and I climbed Mount Lyell the highest peak in Yosemite National Park our base camp was less than 2,000 feet from the peak but the climb to the top and back was to take the better part of a day due in large part to the difficulty of the glacier we had to cross to get to the top as the hours passed the two more experienced mountaineers opened up a wide gap between me and my less experienced companion I began to look for shortcuts to beat them to the top don't do it don't look for shortcuts walk where God tells you there are no shortcuts I thought I saw one to the right of an outcropping of rock so I went deaf to the protests of my companion 30 minutes later I was trapped in a cul-de-sac of rock atop the glacier I was looking down several hundred feet of a sheer slope of ice at about a 45 degree angle I was only about 10 feet from safety but one little slip and I would not stop sliding until I landed in the valley floor some 50 miles away the warm sun had made the glacier glisten with slippery ice I was stuck and I was scared anybody in that shape this morning?

I was stuck and I was scared my experienced friends found me they were standing on the rock I wanted to reach one of them reached out and chipped two little footsteps in the glacier I have these axes then he gave me the following instructions Ben you must step out from where you are and put your foot where the first foothold is then when your foot touches it without a moment's hesitation swing your other foot across to land it on the next step when you do that reach out and I will take your hand and pull you to safety I can almost feel that all the way the next thing he said frightened me more than ever as you step across do not lean into the mountain if anything lean out a bit otherwise your feet may fly out from under you and you will start sliding down you can see if he took a step and was leaning this way his feet would go that way it was wise so he said no no you got to stand up straight lean out slightly and make your two steps based solely on what I believe to be the good will and good sense of my friend I decide to say no to what I felt to stifle my impulse to cling to the security of the mountain to lean out to step out and to go to safety it took less than two seconds to be safe and he made it so God is saying to you stretch out your hand take away the stone step into the water get your feet wet I won't let you drown I'll be there and I'll give you the victory let us bow in prayer thank you father for your word seal it in such a way in such a power that some here this morning will have their lives changed in Jesus name we pray and now two things before we sing tonight we have very special Christian concert here and I'm going to take five minutes in the concert to present the gospel very clearly and to lead people in a silent prayer to receive Christ bring some non-Christians with you tonight to hear the music will you? bring someone tonight that needs Christ to hear this really fine music that they may be blessed and they may hear the gospel the other thing is I want you to know how excited I am about the fundraising thing that we're that we're into for our Thanksgiving banquet we're going to kill two birds with one stone we're going to put that money on the mortgage on the principal and at the same time we're going to free up some interest money for ministry and staff do you see that? it's a wonderful step of faith pray and believe God with us and come to that banquet ready to take a step of faith and to see God do some wonderful things amen? let's stand and sing

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