

Overcoming By Faith Ministries

SERMON NOTES

with Pastor Greg Formey

A Courageous Plan To Expand The Home Team

Genesis 12:1-5

Saturday and Sunday, July 21-22, 2018

"A small beginning do not despise it. Because you chose to step out of your security to stand in Me," says the Lord, "you will see the reward in this place. It will spring up and be strong. It will be a sure work on a sure foundation." (Spoken to me by Cathy Lechner in January 1996, a little over two years after my family and I moved to Columbia SC.)

There comes a time when you realize that there are things more important than the familiar, the routine, or the comfortable. That time arrives when you become aware of a need that you alone are called upon to fill. It may be a courageous choice to do something new within the home team, or something expansive that extends the team beyond the safety of its community life. When you heed the call to expansion, at some point, everything in you shifts, and you realize that you must respond to your present dissatisfaction with the status quo. **Deuteronomy 32:11** is a strong illustration of this: **"As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings..."** (NKJV)

THE CALL TO LEAVE A SECURE PLACE

Can you leave a place of comfort to build a better future for you and your family? One man did in a most profound way. His name was Abram, from Ur of the Chaldees.

Genesis 12:1-4a

¹The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you. ⁴So Abram departed as the Lord had instructed..." (NLT)

Pastor Rick and the Overcoming By Faith leadership team had regularly discussed and prayed about the church's extension into South Carolina. I was happy about the prospects, but I had no clue that this vision would eventually change my life profoundly.

THE COURAGE TO STEP OUT

It is no small matter to lead your family to a new place. It was the singularly most difficult decision of Abram's life.

Genesis 12:4-7

⁴So Abram departed as the Lord had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan, ⁶Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites. ⁷Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord, who had appeared to him. (NLT)

THE COMFORT IN GOING WITH GOD’S GUIDANCE

- Set aside time to pray

There are times when the team can come to a conclusion, with the Lord's help, that some members must be set apart for team expansion. The prophets and teachers in Antioch did just that with the His guidance.

Acts 13:2-3

²One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.” ³So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. (NLT)

- Keep pressing toward the goal

Acts 16:6-10

⁶Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. ⁷Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there. ⁸So instead, they went on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas. ⁹That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” ¹⁰So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there. (NLT)

That one step across the Aegean Sea was the beginning of the expansion of the faith into Europe and beyond. You are a Christian today because Barnabas and Saul expanded the home team!

Conclusion

There comes a time when you realize that stagnation will stall your growth. Even in the best of situations, there can be a tendency to rest on your laurels and to cease developing. That would have been the case for me. I can now testify that the choice to expand the team has brought blessing to my family's life that cannot be adequately explained or calculated. It has made all the difference.

So, what about you? God has created you with a built-in need to progress and expand the home team. What you must discover is your part in our journey.