



FINDING YOUR WAY BACK | Rich Guerra

Genesis 12:1-9

Introduction

This past year and a half has been the most unique in our lifetime...

- Global pandemic that shuts down the world.
- Racial tension/ Political tension
- Riots in the streets
- Presidential election contested
- New President – Half of the people love, the other half hate.
- An invasion on our Nation's Capitol
- Division on almost everything (politics, social issues, wear mask/don't wear masks)
- Vaccination | No vaccination

Crisis can happen any time and at any age.

Because of the crisis we've been through these past couple of years, how do you find your way back to where you once were?

Have you ever felt lost?

Have you ever felt hopeless?

EX- Pheasant hunting with Dad and Grandpa.

"If you get lost, you can find your way back."

How do you find your way back after a crisis?

Please consider with me the experience of Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-9 (NIV) (Outline)

"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'

4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. 5 He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem.

At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 The Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. 9 Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev."

God said,

"Go from your country!"

Now that is a shocking request.

How would you like it if God said,

"Go from America!" ? At 75 years old?

I think both you and I would think, this is impossible.

Initially we would be shocked.

Abraham was asked to leave his comfort.

- His security, and
- His plan for his life.

Maybe that's what has happened to you during this last year of the pandemic.

- Maybe you've lost your job,
- Maybe you've lost your health.
- Maybe you've lost hope for your marriage.

When you feel lost, you don't want to go anywhere.

So, how do you find your way back?

• **Listen For His Voice.**

(Outline)

Genesis 12:1(NIV), the Lord had said to Abram:

(Outline)

"Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."

Abraham both heard and obeyed.

And because he did a nation was born, a theology of monotheism birthed, and a cradle for the Savior built.

The three things **God** says to us when we feel lost and need to find our way back:

(1) He is in control.

Consider:

– **Moses** - Expelled from Egypt, he became a shepherd in a wilderness place.

God was in control.

– **Joseph** - Sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, lands in an Egyptian dungeon.

God was in control.

– **Saul of Tarsus** - Newly converted to Christ, finds himself isolated in Arabia.

God was in control.

– **John the Beloved** - Exiled to Patmos by the blood-thirsty Emperor Domitian, writes the great account of the revelation of Jesus Christ at the end of the age.

God was in control then.

God is in control now.

(2) He is speaking.

When we feel lost and need to find our way back, God is speaking.

Are you listening? You might be thinking -

– How am I going to make it financially? Spiritually? Relationally?

God is speaking, but who are you listening to?

EX– I have always been drawn to C.S. Lewis and his perspective on pain.

Lewis had tasted pain in ways that few can relate to.

He lost his mother at an early age,

– saw his dad emotionally abandon him,

– suffered from a respiratory illness as a teenager,

– fought and was wounded in World War I, and finally,

– had to bury his beloved wife.

Through everything that Lewis went through in his life, he wrote about all of his heartache in his work

The Problem of Pain.

In this work, Lewis penned one of his most famous lines:

“Pain insists upon being attended to.

God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

It is in the “crisis times” that we are most often, most willing to hear a word from God.

(3) He is softening my heart.

During these past couple of years, I became more sensitive to others.

I was no longer quick to judge those who were struggling or who had failed.

What an incredible opportunity to prepare our hearts to receive and our ears to hear.

Are you going through a time in your life where you feel lost?

Do you need to find your way back?

If so, don't despair.

See these moments as an opportunity to hear from God.

Expect him to speak.

And as He speaks, be quick to listen.

When you're feeling lost and need to find your way back –

- **Listen for His voice.**

• **Enter Into His Presence.**

(Outline)

Genesis 12:7 (NIV) (Outline)

“The Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your offspring I will give this land.’ So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.”

When you're in a crisis or feel lost, be a worshipper.

Instead of giving way to fear, hurt, anger, vindictiveness, and depression, become a true worshipper of the living God.

Or, put slightly differently, build there an altar unto the Lord and worship Him.

- **Noah** - Genesis 8:20
- **Abraham** - Genesis 12:7-8; 13:18; 22:2,9
- **Moses** - Exodus 17:15
- **Joshua** - Joshua 8:30
- **David** - 2 Samuel 24:25

All built altars and worshipped the Lord in times of transitions.

Satan argues that, “Now is the time to give up.”

People are very vulnerable during crisis.

And, tragically, some do give up.

- They turn the crisis into an exit and walk away from God and the church.
- They lack the faith and fortitude to deal positively with the crisis they are going through.

No matter how depressed I got, I didn't stop worshiping God.

There is a **better way** than being depressed.

The way of **worship!**

- Listen For His Voice
- Enter Into His Presence

• **Look For His Promise.** (Outline)

Hebrews 11:10 (NIV), the writer to the Hebrews says of Abraham that, (Outline)

“For he [Abraham] was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”

- Where was it located?
- How big was it?
- Who will rule and reign in that city?

The Hebrew writer is saying,

“I can't give you many details, but I do know that God has promised. That alone is enough.”

Hebrews 11:8 (NIV) (Outline)

It is almost with a sense of humor that the same writer describes the courageous faith of Abraham by observing that,

“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.”

What a powerful lesson on faith.

Especially as it relates to the times in our lives when we're in crisis, or when we're feeling lost, and we need to find our way back.

Faith of this quality and character is not dependent on details.

It does not concern itself with timing, methodology, and means.

It simply declares that God has promised and that is sufficient.

EX- Remember what Grandpa said – “look for the pole.”

I had forgotten the promise that my Grandpa had given me. He had promised that he would be waiting for me.

Why Do I Keep My Eyes On His Promise?

Simply this,

(1) His promise provides hope and confidence. (Outline)

That **divinely-given promise** will sustain you by creating a hope and confidence that God is going to see you through.

Your future will be supported, despite uncertainties, by the reliability of divine promise.

So it has always been with the people of great faith.

– **Noah** saw a **liberated people**.

– **Isaiah** saw a **lamb slain**.

– **John** saw a **coming Savior**.

– **Paul** saw a **conquering church**.

It really is true.

When you're feeling lost, or you're going through a crisis in your life, you can stand firmly on the promise of God.

What He has promised He will do.

God says,

“Have I not said it?”

“Will I not do it?”

Yes, it takes patience.

God's promise to Abraham is still waiting for fulfillment.

But the waiting does not in any way diminish the power of the promise.

God's Word stands!

Delay has no power to strip promise of its authority and hope-producing power.

Secondly,

(2) His promise provides strength and courage. (Outline)

You will find incredible strength and courage if you will.

- What are the transitional points in your life at this moment?
- How are you dealing with them?
- Is there frustration, uncertainty and fear?

If so, will you consider the testimony of Abraham?

This giant of faith stands as a sentinel in the crisis intersections of your life.

How are you dealing with what is happening in your life today?

Maybe you are on the verge of–

- ending your marriage,
- ending your relationship with God,
- ending your life.

Have you lost hope?

The answer is found in Jesus Christ.

Today, just do these three things–

- **Listen for His voice.**

Did you hear His voice today? He's speaking to you.

He's saying,

Matthew 11:28(NIV) (PPT Only)

“Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Will you come to Him today?

- **Enter into His presence.**

Stop running away from God and start running to Him.

Psalms 100:4(NIV) (PPT Only)

“Enter His gates with thanksgiving; and His courts with praise...”

- **Look for His promises.**

Philippians 4:19(NIV), Paul writes, (PPT Only)

“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”

That's God's promise!

Do you feel lost today? Jesus is waiting for you. (Final Outline)

MESA CHURCH COMMITMENT & DEDICATION SERVICE

17660 COWAN IRVINE, CA 92614 AUGUST 28, 2022

Today, we gather to dedicate this building and ourselves for the mission to which God has brought our congregation together. We exist to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus. We do this by “setting the Table” for people to Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose, and to Make a Difference. We believe God will change lives, marriages, & families in this building! But, the consecration of this building is not enough! God desires us, His people, to dedicate ourselves as “living sacrifices” and instruments of righteousness that He can use to reach our family members, neighbors, & coworkers. In addition, we believe our church family can reach beyond our community to the lost and dying of this world through global missions. To this end we raise our hearts and voices in consecration to the One who has made it possible for us to possess and pass on the HOPE of eternal life.

PASTOR | *With gratitude for those who have, over the years, made possible the founding, growth and development of Mesa Church...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

PASTOR | *Having been guided by the Lord Jesus Christ and by His enabling grace, wisdom, power and provision this house where God's people can gather to exalt Him...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

PASTOR | *With gratitude to God for those who have sacrificially given, faithfully prayed, and diligently worked to make this house of God a reality...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

PASTOR | *For the purpose of worshipping the one and only true God our Father, His Son Jesus who died for our sins and His Holy Spirit who indwells us...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

PASTOR | *In order to provide a place where people can grow and mature in their relationship with Jesus Christ through instruction from His word...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

PASTOR | *So that the people of God can have opportunity to love one another, minister to one another and pray for one another through fellowship...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

PASTOR | *Having a desire to fulfill the great commission and reach the people of this community and the world with the hope of eternal life through evangelism...*

PEOPLE | *We dedicate this house of God*

We, the people of God, have established this house of God for the mission of leading people into a growing relationship with Jesus. We dedicate ourselves to “set the table” for people to Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose, and Make a Difference in this building and through the church community that is sent out from it. Through Worship, Instruction, Fellowship, and Evangelism we now dedicate ourselves as servants of the One who loved us and saved us. We commit to Him our faithfulness in reaching out to our family members, neighbors, & coworkers with God's Good News of love, forgiveness, healing, grace, and mercy. We commit to resourcing God's mission and missionaries to bring the same Good News to the ends of the Earth. We dedicate ourselves and this house of worship to BE “a church for the community!”

AMEN!