

Moving Forward From Here
Lesson 03 of the series “Thrive/Survive”

1. After the Israelites had been socially isolated for about a year God told them it was time to get going again.

“The LORD said to Moses, ‘Get going, you and the people you brought up from the land of Egypt. Go up to the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I told them, ‘I will give this land to your descendants.’ And I will send an angel before you... Go up to this land that flows with milk and honey.”

Exodus 33:1-2 (NLT)

Note: God uses times in isolation to mature his people and help them get organized.

“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.” James 1:2-4 (NLT)

Note: God loves His children and wants us to love and trust Him more than anyone or anything else.

“But I will not travel among you, for you are a stubborn and rebellious people. If I did, I would surely destroy you along the way.” Exodus 33:3 (NLT)

“I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. You must not have any other god but me. You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea.” Exodus 20:2-4 (NLT2)

“You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38 (NLT2)

2. Moses didn’t want to go anywhere unless God went with him.

“Then Moses said, ‘If you don’t personally go with us, don’t make us leave this place.’” Exodus 33:15 (NLT)

Note: The Lord is a trustworthy guide for our lives.

“I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.” Psalms 32:8 NLT

“The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand.” Psalms 37:23-24 (NLT)

“The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.” Psalm 23:1-4 (NLT)

Life Application: We must not trust anyone but the Lord to guide us.

“There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.” Proverbs 14:12 (NLT)

“Unless the LORD builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the LORD protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good.” Psalm 127:1 (NLT)

Note: The Lord is our guide NOT an app.

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.” Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT2)

3. Moses wasn’t worried about moving forward because He met with God regularly and talked to him about everything.

It was Moses’ practice to take the Tent of Meeting and set it up some distance from the camp. Everyone who wanted to make a request of the LORD would go to the Tent of Meeting outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the Tent of Meeting, all the people would get up and stand in the entrances of their own tents. They would all watch Moses until he disappeared inside. As he went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and hover at its entrance while the LORD spoke with Moses. When the people saw the cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, they would stand and bow down in front of their own tents. Inside the Tent of Meeting, the LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Afterward Moses would return to the camp... “ Exodus 33:7-11(NLT)

Good News! As God's children we don't need to be worried about moving forward because we can talk with God about everything any time we wish.

"And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place... let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him." Hebrews 10:19-22 (NLT)

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right." 2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT)

"Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him? But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ." 1 Corinthians 2:16 (NLT)

Life Application: A growing, personal relationship with Jesus requires time, effort and daily surrender.

"The end of all things is near. Therefore, be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray."
1 Peter 4:7 (NIV)

"Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you." Psalms 143:8 NLT

John Schmidt • 05-03-20 • john@centeringlives.com

Connect Group **questions**

1. Describe a time in your life when you became thoroughly lost and confused while traveling. How did you find your way again? Did anyone guide you back onto the right path?
2. Read Matthew 11:28-30. What do you think it means to be "yoked" together with Jesus? What are the implications of this to our plans? ...to our worries about the future?
3. Read Exodus 33:1-15. Why do you think Moses was unwilling to move forward from Mount Sinai unless the Lord went with him? Do you depend on God like Moses did? Why? Why not?
4. Spend some time as a group turning each of the following verses from Psalms into a prayer request for God's guidance. (Psalm 1:6, 23:1-4, 25:8-9, 32:8, 37:23-24, 127:1, 143:8) Then take turns praying them out loud.
5. What is the difference between following a guide and using an app like Google Maps? Which image (guide or app) best describes your relationship with God?
6. Read 1 Peter 4:7. Why do you think many Christians have found it harder than usual to spend personal time with God during this pandemic?
7. Quotations to consider:

"Are you willing to say to God that he can have whatever he wants? Do you believe that wholehearted commitment to him is more important than any other thing or person in your life? Do you know that nothing you do in this life will ever matter unless it is about loving God and loving the people He has made?" Francis Chan

"I have so much to do today that I'm going to need to spend three hours in prayer in order to be able to get it all done." Martin Luther

"I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that he will guide me to do whatever I'm supposed to do, what I can do. I used to pray for answers, but now I'm praying for strength. I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things." Mother Teresa
8. Spend some time as a group praying for each other's needs and for the needs of people around the world. Please use the following prayer list from Christianity Today as a guide.
<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/march-web-only/covid-19-coronavirus-20-prayers-to-pray-during-pandemic.html>