**Converge Church Planting Weekend**

**Sermon: When God says “Go”**

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We have a world that is trying to drown the voice of God: The media, TV, news, politicians, magazines, universities, etc.

* People are more medicated than ever before
* people all around us are walking through their days in drudgery believing they aren’t good enough
* If you don’t know what God really has said and what God believes about you…you eventually begin to believe the lies of the enemy!

That is why we have to commit to go. **We can’t say no when God says go!** And yet…we can be really good at coming up with excuses as to why we can’t go. I know firsthand. [Give personal examples of excuses that came to your mind when God told you to go].

For many of us, we wrestle with similar fears and questions: What is this going to cost me? I am not smart enough! I don’t have the right leaders I don’t have not enough money.

I don’t, I don’t, I don’t.

I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.

Have you thought about the ramifications of either answers? If we say no…or if we say yes, I will go.

Would you turn in your bibles to Deuteronomy 1? We are going to pick up in a story where a whole generation dies in the desert because a few people chose to say no when God said, “Go!”

Would you be open to God and what he is saying to you today? Will you join me in committing ourselves to staying open to what he is doing?

Deuteronomy 1:1…These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in [*a*](https://www.esv.org/De3.17)the Arabah opposite [*b*](https://www.esv.org/Nm21.14)Suph, between [*c*](https://www.esv.org/1S25.1)Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

God often speaks in the wilderness! *(Share an example of when you’ve been in the wilderness and God spoke to you.)*

It is [eleven days’] journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to [*d*](https://www.esv.org/De2.14%3BDe9.23%3BNm13.26%3BNm32.8%3BNm34.4)Kadesh-barnea.

In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month,

How much of our Christianity is spent wandering around the same mountain over and over again? What should have taken 11 days turned into 40 years!

We are doing laps around the same old mountain and the same old issues!

* Nobody is going to buy into that vision.
* We have never done it that way before.
* How do we get more people giving?
* How do we get more people serving?
* Is it even possible to reach non-Christians here?

God says, “Hang on a minute! This was supposed to be an 11-day journey! Yes, there has been pain. Yes, there is a process of restoration in place. But, come on…11 days? And now we are at a point 40 years later!

I wonder: What is your 40 years? What is it? Same old mountains, same old issues, same old thing!

Moses spoke to the people of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him in commandment to them, 4after [*f*](https://www.esv.org/Nm21.21-32)he had defeated Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and *[g](https://www.esv.org/Nm21.33-35)*Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and in [*h*](https://www.esv.org/De3.1%3BDe3.10%3BJos12.4%3BJos13.12)Edrei. 5

Beyond the Jordan, *(Underscoring the fact they hadn’t made it to the promise land yet)* [*i*](https://www.esv.org/De29.1)in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to explain this law, saying, “The LORD our God said to us in Horeb, [*j*](https://www.esv.org/De2.3%3BEx19.1%3BNm10.11)‘You have stayed long enough at this mountain.

Turn and take your journey, and go to [*k*](https://www.esv.org/Nm13.29)the hill country of the Amorites and to all their neighbors in [*a*](https://www.esv.org/De1.1)the Arabah, [*l*](https://www.esv.org/Jos9.1)in the hill country and in the lowland and in the Negeb and [*l*](https://www.esv.org/Jos9.1)by the seacoast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.

I think God is saying to some of us here today, “You have stayed here long enough at that mountain!

Whatever those mountains are…you have been there long enough!

In our lives, we have experienced past victories. We’ve also experienced losses.

We can admire the faith and the work of the past…but we can’t claim it as our own. We must be willing to pray, “God do it again. Do something so mighty that we cannot take credit for it. We pray you will show yourself. That you would speak and a radical thing would take place. Don’t allow us to get stuck wandering around the same mountain, but allow us to explore your goodness in the place where you want to take us.”

God comes in 40 years later and say “HEY!!!” You have been here long enough! And now the generation is standing in the same spot as the previous generation and the question is whether or not they will repeat the mistake.

It is time to go. It is time to break camp and advance! What God did…was disrupt their “normal.” He steps in and disrupts their routine. There is going to come a time that God steps in and says…Hey! It is time for a change!

If we are honest…there are moments in the journey of restoration, there are moments when becoming the people that God wants us to become, there are moments in the life of our church…that God says…time to move, break camp and advance to something new.

And sometimes it hurts.

Have you ever broken something? It hurts!

To help ease the pain we have to recognize our attachment to what’s familiar and our own personal resistance to change.

God says to his people, I just brought you out of 430 years of slavery…and you came out of Egypt and there was going to be an 11-day journey through the wilderness. Scriptures actually teach us that God was taking them the long way through the wilderness. Not every wilderness moment is from the devil. God will sometimes take us the long way around to get us to our destiny.

It was supposed to take 11 days. But because they had just come out of Egypt, God had to get Egypt out of them! They came out of slavery, but they were still thinking and acting like slaves. God was working to remove their past and to bring about a new life with a new understanding.

The longer you stay somewhere, the more comfortable and connected you become. It becomes harder to accept change.

Oh, we may complain a lot about the place where we are, but we are also becoming less willing to change.

Breaking camp involved a major change in their mindset and expectations. They had been camped there for a long time. But now, it’s time to move forward into all they knew they were called to.

Those tent pegs were getting pretty settled in the ground. The people were relaxing. Now it was time to put on a mindset of mobility, because they weren’t home yet. God began to to shake them out of their settledness.

At the end of the chapter, Moses says to them, “I sent 12 leaders to go and spy out the land and God had told us he was giving us that land.” Ten of those leaders came back with a negative report: “You should have seen their economy, their political system, their morality, the way they live…ohhhh, it is so bad. There is no way that we could possibly go in!”

Only two guys, Joshua and Caleb, were the only two to come back and said, “What are you talking about! We can take that land. God said he is giving it to us. Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world!”

We have nothing to fear…because God has not given us a spirit of fear. Wherever we go we have the opportunity to see the world transformed through the power of God! Just ten people coming back with a negative report had the power to change an entire generations destiny!

What we do matters. What we teach matters, what we blog matters, what we tweet matters, what we put on social media matters. Are you a part of negativity, nay-sayers, doom and gloom conversation? Or are you a part of the conversation that is life giving and inspires love and hope and opportunity?

Ten people is all it took. Ten people saying we can’t do it was all it took to keep an entire generation from experiencing God’s destiny for them!

We have this particular moment in history and this moment in this nation where the church can change the narrative.

See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, [*m*](https://www.esv.org/Gn12.7%3BGn13.14-15%3BGn15.18%3BGn17.7-8%3BGn26.3-4%3BGn28.13-14%3BGn50.24)to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.’

Go and take possession. For some of us, we need to go. Others of us need to help those that are called to go! Why this matters right now?

Consider these statistics:

* There are about 200 million non-churched people in America, making America one of the four largest “unchurched” nations in the world.
* Each year about 3700 churches close their doors permanently.
* We open about 4000 churches per year.
* In the 2010 Census there were 324,000 churches in America. Four out of five are either plateaued or declining.
* America has a population of about 309,000,000 people.
* That means we have approximately 1 church for every 1000 people.
* In 2050…conservative predictions are the population in the US will be 400,000,000. If we want to keep a 1:1000 ratio, we need to be at 400,000 churches by year 2050.
* Currently we are netting 300 churches a year. To stay at the same ratio, we need to net 1900 churches a year.

There is a need for people to hear the gospel!

One American denomination recently found that 80% of its converts came to Christ in churches less than two years old.

I believe that God is telling us as a group of churches…**the time is now!** More church planting is needed! I have set the land before you…it is time to break camp and advance!

We need to be willing to go to a new land.

It is going to require more sacrifice.

We are going to need to be more reliant on God’s power.

Let’s ask God to unleash a movement unlike anything we’ve seen before. And let’s ask him to allow us to be a small part of that.

**WE can’t say no…when God says go!**