**"GO FORWARD"**

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Most of us have experiences which require that we go forward even when we feel that there is no way, and that every door is closed and our path blocked. We need confidence in God's direction that we may start without misgiving, assured that His presence, light, and protection are with us.

The children of Israel journeyed forty years through the wilderness. Thus they were led out of bondage into some recognition of the promised land of spiritual peace, security, beauty, and abundance. when at length they were ready to claim the victory and enter the land to possess it, the river Jordan obstructed their path. Although it looked impossible to cross it on foot, divine inspiration led Joshua to direct his people to go forward. They were obedient to the command despite the evidence of the senses, and, the narrative continues, when the feet of the priests who were the vanguard touched the edge of the water, "it came to pass...that the waters . ..stood and rose up upon an heap. ...And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground" ([Josh. 3:14, 16, 17](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=it+came+to+pass...that+the+waters+.+..stood+and+rose+up+upon+an+heap.+...And+the+priests+that+bare+the+ark+of+the+covenant+of+the+Lord+stood+firm+on+dry+ground+in+the+midst+of+Jordan%2C+and+all+the+Israelites+passed+over+on+dry+ground&book=tfccs.main.hb.kj)).

The procession into the land of promise was led by the bearers of the ark of the covenant, which enclosed the tables of stone whereon were written the Ten Commandments. The ark typified God's guidance of His children, His requirement that they obey His law. and His promise of the safety and prosperity which always accompany obedience. The Israelites could not have gone fearlessly forward without a consciousness of the irresistible power of this covenant.

Perhaps the river Jordan in our experience may not be removed from our path until our progressing footsteps touch the water. If those steps are taken in obedience to God's guidance, every obstacle will vanish into its nothingness. The writer at one time experienced the healing of a severe physical difficulty which had required earnest continuance in prayer. Faithful study of the Bible and the writings of Mary Baker Eddy brought light and great spiritual growth. During this period a spiritual conviction developed which clearly indicated God's direction that she follow a certain line of work which would be of service to the world. She promptly obeyed this guidance and sent in an application for the work. This was definitely rejected, and she was told not even to come for an interview.

The river Jordan across her path looked very wide at that point. But the weight of human opinion could in no way counterbalance the guidance which had come from God, the rightness of which had been attested by the healing evidence it brought. She therefore terminated her other business activities and traveled to the city to which she had sent her application. The following morning she was engaged for the very work for which she had applied. This proved to be the most fruitful, satisfying, joyous activity that had ever come into her experience.

One could never safely make such a forward move if he were impelled merely by human will or ambition. These negative qualities would never roll back one drop of the river which seemed to be across the path. The ark of the covenant must go before us to prepare the way. The first steps we need to take are spiritually mental ones. Prayer and consecrated study of the Bible and the writings of our Leader bring to us an understanding of the nature of God as Love. We learn that His law is just, generous, intelligent, and righteous, and that it blesses all His children equally. This law is a law of progress, obedience to which inevitably means a progressive expression of good in our lives.

Honest listening for God's voice, shutting our mental door to the counterfeit voices of human opinion, selfish desire, ambition, and material outlining, brings the light of Truth to our thoughts. when in this light we are shown even one step ahead, we must hasten to take it with joyous confidence, knowing that each further step will be clear at the proper time. Obedience to God's requirements is the imperative demand of divine Principle.

Mrs. Eddy tells us (Miscellaneous Writings, [p. 117](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=God+is+the+fountain+of+light%2C+and+He+illumines+one%27s+way+when+one+is+obedient.+The+disobedient+make+their+moves+before+God+makes+His%2C+or+make+them+too+late+to+follow+Him.+Be+sure+that+God+directs+your+way%3B+then%2C+hasten+to+follow+under+every+circumstance.)): "God is the fountain of light, and He illumines one's way when one is obedient. The disobedient make their moves before God makes His, or make them too late to follow Him. Be sure that God *directs* your way; then, hasten to follow under every circumstance."

At the beginning of their journey out of Egypt the children of Israel had faced an even bigger problem, the solution of which must have given them confidence in God's ability to guide them safely over Jordan. In those days it was Moses who was leading them, and the obstruction was the Red Sea. His first command to the people was ([Ex.14:13](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Fear+ye+not%2C+stand+still%2C+and+see+the+salvation+of+the+Lord.&book=tfccs.main.hb.kj)), "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." This standing still was not an inactive waiting—in that stillness they were to see "the salvation of the Lord." In the measure that they beheld the goodness and love of God and recognized His presence, they obeyed the command, "Fear ye not." When this mental preparation was complete, they were ready for the next order (verse 15): "Go forward."

The command to stand still and the command to go forward were not contradictory. They were both comprised in the same progressive experience. Mrs. Eddy expresses it thus in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" ([p.323](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Beholding+the+infinite+tasks+of+truth%2C+we+pause%2C%E2%80%94wait+on+God.+Then+we+push+onward%2C+until+boundless+thought+walks+enraptured%2C+and+conception+unconfined+is+winged+to+reach+the+divine+glory.&book=tfccs.main.sh)): "Beholding the infinite tasks of truth, we pause,—wait on God. Then we push onward, until boundless thought walks enraptured, and conception unconfined is winged to reach the divine glory."

Sitting idly by, waiting for God or some person to toss opportunity into our hands, will never win the victory. We must go forward mentally and live in accord with our increasing spiritual vision. We need ever to be active, using all we know of the truth. Thus we shall take every step revealed by God, grow in Christian character, and rejoice all the way in the certainty of His care. There is an old saving that a ship can be steered only when it is moving.

When Jesus told the ten lepers to go and show themselves to the priests, which was necessary in order that they he reinstated in their community as healthy men, the physical symptoms of leprosy were still evident. They were obedient in spite of the material sense testimony, and "as they went" they were healed ([Luke 17:14](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=as+they+went&book=tfccs.main.hb.kj)).