

“How Far Will You Go?”
By Brother Kenneth Ray
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This is an open-ended question, isn't it? In order to answer it, you need to know: 1) What it is you're doing, 2) What direction you are going, 3) Where are you trying to get, and 4) Where do you need to be? Sometimes it feels like you are going backwards. Sometimes there is a battle in your mind between where you want to go, and where God wants you to go.

For example, at work, if you are trying to get a promotion, are you working hard, getting to know the information, checking all the right boxes, or are you just buddying up to your supervisor? Sometimes it takes more effort to get out of work than to actually do the work.

How far you are willing to go and what direction you are going depends upon your relationship with God.

We all know the story of Moses. He was born in Egypt, placed in a basket, adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, became a prince of Egypt, and then chose to live with his own people. God spoke to him through a burning bush, and told him to lead his people out of Egypt. He was a humble man, but he spoke with God and received the Ten Commandments. He also had an anger problem: Not only was he the first man to break all Ten Commandments at once, but another time when the people needed water, he got angry, and it cost him dearly.

Numbers 20:8 ...speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth its water...

Numbers 20:9-12 ...with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out...

Now God told Moses to speak unto the rock, but Moses spoke to the congregation, and hit the rock. The rock gave out water anyway, because God honored the need of the people. But God told Moses that he would not be allowed to enter into the Promised Land. Now Moses was no ordinary Joe; he suffered a lot leading a bunch of whiners through the wilderness for forty years, but God told him that he couldn't come in. Notice that He didn't say Moses wasn't going to Heaven, just that he couldn't cross the *physical* Jordan River.

So Joshua took over the work of Moses, and led Israel into the Promised Land. Does everybody know the song, "Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho?" We all sang that in Sunday school, right? Well, God told the Israelites not to take anything from the city.

Joshua 6:17-18 ...touch not the accursed thing...

The next city that Israel went up against was much smaller: the city of Ai. They thought that it would be much easier, but in the initial battle, Israel took a beating. They wondered why, and it turned out that there was a man named Achan who had taken some gold from Jericho. They stoned Achan and his family. Now some of us have accursed

things in our lives. It's different for each person; it may be sports, politics, recreation, a person, a place, an event, the environment, or just an attitude. You may think that it only affects you, but, just as Achan's accursed thing affected all of Israel, yours affects everyone around you. IT has to be removed so that you can move forward.

Jesus, as a young child, said that He must be about His Father's business (Luke 2:49). He said that His meat was to do the will of God (John 4:34). He was baptized of John (Matthew 3:15). He didn't need to be baptized, but He did it as example to us. He also prayed that 'this cup' be allowed to pass from Him, but, if not, that God's will be done (Matthew 26:39,42); 'this cup' meaning the crucifixion. In Matthew 27:50, we see that Jesus 'yielded up the ghost,' that is, He died on the cross. But He rose again.

Matthew 28:5-6 ...He is not here, for He is risen...

Apostle Paul, when he was still known as Saul, consented unto the death of the Saints. He was blinded on the road to Damascus (so that he could see), and shown what things he should suffer for Jesus' name's sake; he was converted, and he started preaching the Gospel. He was ready to die for Jesus.

Acts 31:13 ...I am ready, not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.

Later on, after he was bound, he had a chance to tell his story to a king named Agrippa.

Acts 26:27-29 ...Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

Paul must have been a very persuasive speaker. How far will you go? There is a distance to travel, but God has something special for each one of us.