

# Follow the Van

Last time I spoke I talked about Enlarging Our Tent... & then about the Tabernacle, the tent where God dwelt among his people.

God's presence was with the people in the visible form of a cloud of smoke over the tent during the day...and a pillar of fire by night.

Both of these have been in the news quite a lot lately in Hawaii... and as we see these amazing images I cant help but think this is pretty much what the Bible was describing. I cannot imagine The cloud of God's presence as being a skinny little wisp of cloud that we see in many pictures... I am sure it was a powerful presence that was active over the Tabernacle.

Can you imagine the effect that would have on other people... The Israelites knew what it was... but imagine being one of Israel's enemies... seeing that come towards you would not be a comforting sight! No doubt they were terrified... for it said in effect 'these people are protected by a powerful God.

God's presence alone was enough to ensure their safety.

The people had to keep an eye on when the cloud did and where it went. They moved when the Lord moved.

When the Ejector seat was first invented several pilots were killed using them. When they ejected...once the aircraft was out of the way to roll forward out of the seat so that their parachute which they were sitting on could open...

But they found that the pilots were holding on to the seat as the rocket fired them out of the plane....and that they 'froze' and forgot to let go... And so crashed to the ground still in the seat! So they redesigned the seat to push them out of the seat two seconds after they had ejected.... The parachute opened & they were safe!.

Just as the pilots need to be forced out of their seats, God had to move the people of Israel from Mt. Sinai.

*Deu 1:6 "When we were at Mount Sinai, the LORD our God said to us, 'You have stayed at this mountain long enough....Break camp and advance...!'*

After almost a year at the mountain after the Exodus, they had settled near Mt Sinai and no doubt become a bit comfortable there. So God commanded Moses to break camp and move on..It was time to enter the land as they followed God's will. .

Let's find out... Who is sat in the same seat you sat in last week?

It's so easy to 'hold on to our seats' and become comfortable where we are. That's when God has to force us out of them, cause us to break camp, and move us to the future He has for us. He calls us to leave the comfortable, be open to change, take faith steps, and trust Him in the face of the unknown.

I want us to watch a **short video now....** It's a very famous old song you probably know... do feel free to join in! <https://youtu.be/Vkzkrs6bzxg?list=WL&t=1>

*My old man Said follow the van  
and don't dilly dally on the way...*

*Off went the cart with the home packed in it  
I walked behind with me old cock linnet.*

*And I dillied and dallied,  
dallied and I dillied  
I lost the van and don't know where to roam*

*You can't trust the specials  
like the old-time coppers  
when you can't find your way home*

The people of Israel DID 'dilly & dally' on the way... instead of staying focussed and obedient to what God was doing.

The result was they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years... which wasn't what God wanted for his people... He had promised them a good land!.

Fortunately unlike Miss Piggy in the song we haven't moved home very often... and certainly not because we can't afford the rent! Right from the beginning of the church in 1906 God's people have willingly supported the work & praise God that continues today! But as you have picked up by now we are moving our Sunday Services. We are NOT selling this building! And we will continue to have our usual midweek functions here.

As the people of Israel moved from place to place there was this very interesting thing about the Lord's camping instructions.

Every tribe & family had a designated area for their living tents to be... around the Tabernacle that was in the centre of the camp.. So every family had a clear view of God's protective guiding presence before them. **This is what the camp** would have looked like from

a high point.... Though they had no idea what this meant.... For us it's clearly a picture of not only how God saved his people but how he dwelt with them too... Through the cross.

When the Cloud moved... everything was packed up... the Tabernacle first... then, with the tribe of Judah leading the Tabernacle at the head of the column the tribes & families all followed in a set order.... They also set up camp in a certain order. This meant that all 2.5 million people knew exactly where they had to be and what they had to do.

Everybody had a job....a role to play. Even the children!

I'm sure that the same will be true with our move... There will be something for everybody to do... If they are willing to do it!. If you don't know HOW to do it...we'll show you & train you.

No matter what your age... Or ability there will be something to do. It may simply be putting a leaflet on a chair... Or putting out the coffee cups. I want us to be an 'Tesco' church.... You know... 'Every little helps!'

We won't be asking the ladies to carry in the Bass Bins.... LOL

There's one fantastic side effect from being here, being involved & doing something... When we work together we become a TEAM....which means...

TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE!

You Not only become somebody on the move... you become somebody who moves others...

You don't only come to church... You can help make church happen... You can help to create the atmosphere of welcome and an environment that people want to be in....Because it's YOUR church..

You can take pride in saying... 'I made that happen.' You will find that you get to know people better... and You will have more fun...

Some of us went to 'Inside out' last week.... When we arrived they wouldn't even let us carry our bags in... some guys came out & took them to our rooms. Just like they do in the Hilton! And when i got to my luxurious bunk bed... with my name on it... there was a little welcome note & a chocolate!

They were only small things...but that small thing sent a BIG message.

Today I want you to have a little gift.... With a BIG message... Its this 'Knowing God Personally' Booklet.

We are going to be using this to talk to people about Jesus in the New Meeting Location and on the street in New Malden.... I want you to take it and read it every day this week.. Learn

the verses from memory if you can.... Because we want to use this help people Know God Personally' but also to help them take the first steps in following Jesus as part of this church.

**This Church** is on the Move! And we can all help make it happen!.

If you are not yet part of God's family... you can become a child of God and a follower of Jesus today... If you want to ask Jesus into you life for the first time today pray this prayer after me... If you are already a christian pray it with me too and stir your faith into action for what God has ahead for all of us...

Pray after me:

Lord Jesus, I want to know you personally.  
I'm sorry for going my own way instead of your way.  
Thank you for dying on the cross to forgive my sin. Please come and take first place in my life and make me the person you want me to be.

If you prayed that with me will you please come & tell me afterwards... I want to give you something to help you as you being your journey of knowing God Personally as part of His family.

Joke:

A young Vicar was in his first parish, had to take a cremation. He had never been there before So he programmed the location in to his Smart phone Sat Nav. & Put the phone in his pocket and set off giving himself plenty of time.

The traffic was horrendous and he got to the crematorium just in time to see the hearse arrive.. He stood by the coffin.and led the party into the chapel... the Undertakers solemnly placed the coffin at the front and bowed to the coffin.... At that moment a voice came from his pocket " You have reached your destination"

