

Conquering The Jericho In Your Life

- *Joshua 6:1-27; Hebrews 11:30*

- **Today, we celebrate the heroic men & women who have sacrificed greatly so that we could enjoy the benefits of this free country that we are living in today.**
 - These heroes have fought bravely, put their lives in eminent danger, and no cost was too great when it came to defending this country.
 - I enjoy listening to the amazing stories that these soldiers have as they recall the difficulties & the triumphs as they fought for our freedom.
- **There is nothing like a good war story, and the story of the walls of Jericho falling down recorded in Joshua 6:1-27, is one of the great war stories in the Old Testament & it's a story that vividly demonstrates the miraculous power of God. But along with that, the utter destruction of Jericho teaches us several grand truths regarding God's grace and our salvation.**
- **The people of Israel had been delivered from the hand of the Egyptians, wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, and now they had just crossed over the Jordan River to claim the land of Canaan.**
 - This was the land of milk and honey God had promised to Abraham over 500 years earlier.
 - After spending forty difficult years wandering in the desert of Sinai, the people of Israel were now on the eastern banks of the Jordan.
 - They were prepared to take this land that had been promised to them, but they first had to go through Jericho.
 - This was a well-fortified city, unlike many with a seemingly unconquerable wall surrounding the city.
 - Researchers tell us that the city covered perhaps eight acres and was protected by two high parallel walls, which stood about fifteen feet apart and surrounded the city. The walls were 11 feet high and at its top was a smooth stone slope, angling upward at 35 degrees for 35 feet, where it joined massive stone walls that towered even higher. It was virtually indestructible.
 - So if God promised this land to the Israelites, how in the world do you strategically take such a city? There were no tanks, mortars, or rockets; so the custom was to surround the city & basically starve the people into submission, but this might take weeks or even months.
 - But God had not led His people to this point without making a way of victory.
 - Church, let me remind you. God has not led you this far without making a way of victory.
 - Your situation right now may seem impossible.
 - You may see no way of escape.
 - Perhaps the temptation or the sin in your life seems too strong with no way out.
 - I Corinthians 10:13 – “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”
 - So what was this great plan to conquer Jericho?
 - God's instructions were that the armed men march around Jericho once a day for six days, followed by seven priests each blowing a trumpet. The priests carrying the Ark of the Lord would come next, and the rear guard would complete the procession. The only noise permitted was the sound of the trumpets. On the seventh day the procession would march around the city seven times, the priests would give a long blast on the trumpets,

and then the marchers would all shout. God would then cause the walls to fall down flat so that the soldiers could easily enter the city.

- As spiritual as you may be today, this doesn't seem like a very effective plan; but it was a plan where God could prove not only His power, but the people's obedience & faith.
- So Joshua followed God's plan in every detail. And when the people did finally shout, the Bible tells us that these massive walls collapsed instantly, and Israel completely destroyed the enemy & took the Promised Land.
- One of the important principles to this story is this. God had already given His people a promise of victory; but it was when the people of God, by faith, followed the commands of God that the walls of Jericho fell down.

➤ **Read Hebrews 11:30**

➤ **The apostle Paul assures us: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." – Romans 15:4**

➤ **This great victory that God brought to the children of Israel shows us several important aspects as it relates to our lives.**

1. Obey God, Even When You Don't Understand

- When disappointment comes or there are obstacles in your life that seem impossible to overcome, many times people will give you counsel like, "Trust in the Lord", "Wait on Him", "Keep praying about it", and just to be truthful, most of the time those answers don't make a lot of sense to us in our time of despair.
 - I mean it's the Biblical thing to do.
 - It sounds good on a card.
 - It sounds good when we are saying it to someone else about their need.
 - But wait about your situation? Does this ring true for you then?
- I got to believe that when God revealed His plan, there were probably a few Free Will Baptist in the group who thought, "Really? That's it?"
- But thankfully, even though this wasn't their plan, they had enough faith in God to be obedient to Him & God wrought the victory.
- When we are faced with seemingly insurmountable odds, we must learn that our Jericho victories are won only when our faithful obedience to God is complete.
 - I John 5:3 – "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

2. God's Plan Doesn't Always Look Like Our Plan

- Whether you like it or not, this would be a great place for an Amen!
 - Is it just me or does God choose His own plan way more than He chooses yours and mine?
 - I feel as though I have things figured out many times; but can you believe God doesn't listen to me? We need to be reminded at times that His way is best.
- I promise you, you will never find this attack option in any military manuals, but as men & women of God may we learn that we should never question God's purpose or instructions.
 - Does it make sense to tell a lame man to get up & walk?
 - Why would you put mud on a blind man's eyes, tell him to go wash in a dirty river & expect him to see?
 - Does it make sense to go to the grave of a dead man who has been dead 4 days & command him to, "Come forth?"
 - Does it make sense that a Holy God would love me & you so much that He would send His Sinless Son to the cross for us?

- Though these ways are not necessarily our ways, we must have faith that God is who He says He is, and will do what He says He will do.
 - Hebrews 10:23 – “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)”

3. The Relationship Between God’s Grace & Our Faith

- Hebrews 11:30 – “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”
- If there was ever a group that had issues with their faith, it was the children of Israel. But on this day, their faith prevailed as they trusted God & His promises unto them.
 - They could have tried their own tactics or walked away defeated; but they were saved by their faith in Almighty God.
 - We too are saved by our faith in God.
 - Ephesians 2:8 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”
 - Romans 5:1 – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”
- Though faith is critical & necessary, it is revealed by our obedience unto God.
 - I find it extremely important that the Bible specifically says that the walls of Jericho “fell by faith”.
 - Faith triumphed after the walls of Jericho "were compassed about seven days".
 - It was one thing for them to believe that God could do what He had promised. But they proved their faith in Him by taking steps of obedience.
 - They could have marched around 1 day & say this is not working & quit.
 - If they had marched around the city for 7 days, blew the trumpets, and carried the ark with them & failed to shout, they still would not have had the victory.
 - It required total submission & complete obedience for God to deliver Jericho to them.
 - James reminds us in 2:26 that faith without works is dead.
 - There are times where praying & waiting on God is like marching around Jericho. We don’t see any immediate results, but we must continue to obey God.
 - Joshua and the Israelites carried out the commands of God and conquered Jericho. God gave them victory over an enemy that was trying to keep them out of the Promised Land.
- This was meant to be an encouragement to God's people to trust the Lord's promises and obey His instructions, no matter how impossible the situation may appear to be.
 - You and I may not capture a city as Joshua did, but in our everyday lives we face enemies and high walls that challenge us.

➤ Let me ask you in closing this morning, “What is your Jericho?”

- What is the thing in your life that shouts at you in defiance when you think about it? What is the one thing that keeps you from fully placing your faith & trust in God?
 - For some, they are convinced that they are too wicked & God could never love them or save them from their wicked life.
 - Maybe for some of you it is a besetting sin that seems to haunt you and you can’t seem to get the victory over it.
 - For others it might be an unhealthy attitude. Maybe you were genuinely done wrong by someone, but now your heart has bitterness toward them and it is eating at you from the inside out.

- What is your Jericho this morning?
 - An unhappy marriage? Guilt over past sins? A lack of confidence? A personal failure?
 - Satan would like nothing more this morning for you to see this Jericho in your life & turn away from it defeated & go right back into the wilderness.
 - But God desires more than anything for you to completely trust in Him & follow Him today.
- **Hebrews 11:30 says, By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.**
 - “By faith...” Victory over Jericho came only by faith.
 - How will true victory come in your life today? By faith alone in the One in whom we find our victory, Jesus Christ.