

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 12.03.2023

FINDING VICTORY THROUGH SURRENDER— JOSHUA 5:13-15

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Daniel tells us, “The story of how the Israelites’ conquered Jericho is one of the most well-known and beloved stories in the Bible. As a kid growing up in Sunday School, we would sing about how ‘Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, Jericho, Jericho. Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, and its walls came tumbling down.’ It’s a classic story and one that makes for great theatre. Israel’s victory was as incredible as it was improbable. Walls aren’t supposed to fall from shouts and trumpet blasts, but these ones did. The climax of the story is so dramatic that it can sometimes overshadow an equally amazing event that preceded it. Yet, without that other event, the walls never come crashing down. That’s the part of the story I want to shine a light on today. Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from the Pastor Daniel’s sermon?
2. Have you or anyone close to you served in the armed forces? If you have, what was the anticipation of battle like? If someone you love has, what types of feelings did you have while they were gone?

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

READ JOSHUA 5:13-15

Joshua was by Jericho because the conquest of Jericho would soon occur, a battle that must have felt daunting and nearly impossible to Joshua. Joshua may have ventured near Jericho to scout the situation and to inspect the fortifications. When Joshua lifted up his eyes, he saw a man. This man was standing in front of Joshua with his sword drawn in his hand. Joshua was in enemy territory preparing for an invasion. The drawn sword signaled potential danger. Subsequent events revealed to Joshua that this was no ordinary man.

1. Read Joshua 1:7-9 and 3:7 for some context. What promise had God made to Joshua, and how did He know start to fulfill it?
2. To win the battle for the Promised Land, Joshua needed to hear what God was saying to him. In what ways does the Bible indicate that God speak to us? Read the following scriptures and discuss: Psalm 119:105, John 6:63, Romans 10:14-15, Is. 6:8-9, Matthew 2:22, Acts 8:26-29.
3. When Joshua asked whose side this man was on (v. 14), the commander of the LORD’s army said “Neither,” What does this mean to you and What does this remind us about our relationship with God and our purpose in this life?

Many have identified this captain of the host of the LORD with the angel of the Lord, who in some contexts cannot be distinguished from the Lord Himself. If such is the case in this situation, the Lord was appearing to Joshua during a critical time in his life to assure him that He would be with him, just as He had promised (Josh. 1:5; 3:7). The statement, “I have now come as commander of the LORD’s army,” let Joshua know that God was in control, and Joshua should make sure he was on God’s side, rather than the other way around.

“PROMISES” in 2023

1. When the commander of the LORD’s army revealed himself, Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down in worship and surrender (v. 14). Read Genesis 18:1-2; Exodus 3:1-6; and Numbers 22:31. What is worship, and why should it be our response to being in the presence of God?
2. What does Joshua teach us in his response to the commander in verse 14?
3. The commander of the LORD’s army told Joshua to take off his sandals, because he was standing on holy ground. How have you been reminded of God’s holiness lately?
4. What implications does God’s holiness have for us as His people?

The divine, or at least superior, rank of the captain of the LORD’s host may be further supported by the fact that he commanded Joshua: “Remove your sandals from your feet.” This command reminds us of Moses’ encounter with the Lord at the burning bush (see Ex. 3:5). The reason for the removal of the sandals was the same with Joshua as with Moses—the place where you are standing is holy. Every place we encounter God is a holy place. Joshua’s encounter with the Lord or His messenger must have encouraged him. As he prepared for the battle, he knew he would not be alone. Joshua received assurance that the Lord would give Israel victory over Jericho (see Josh. 6:2).

Because of the gospel, we have the same assurance Joshua did that God is with us and for us. During John’s vision of the end times, recorded in Revelation, we see a picture of Jesus in the role of commander of the LORD’s army, a picture that gives us hope when life looks daunting, and our battles seem insurmountable.

READ REVELATION 19:11-17.

1. What names did John use to describe Jesus? What do these names of Jesus tell us about Him?
2. Look at each one of the descriptions of Jesus in this passage. What do they tell us about the results of His second coming?

The rider’s name was Faithful and True (v. 11). Faithful means steadfast, unflinching in character. Jesus never fails. True means consistent in character. Jesus is never false and never acts inconsistently. He comes to judge the earth precisely because He is faithful and true to God’s will and His character. Verse 12 tells us that He has a name known only to Himself. Since the name stands for the person, this surely means that His person escapes complete understanding. His majesty is beyond our ability to comprehend. A third name appears in verse 13, The Word of God. The title identifies Christ as the One who accomplishes God’s will. Another name is on His robe and on His thigh (v. 16). The inscription KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS occurs in a prominent place, symbolic of His power. He is the ultimate Ruler. Together, these names tell us that Jesus is supremely above all and that His majesty is beyond our comprehension.

1. What hopes and fears does this triumphant picture bring out in you?
2. How has Christ been your Deliverer recently?

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

“PROMISES” in 2023

To make Jesus your Lord is to surrender every area of your life over to Him. It means your time, your talents, and your treasure all belong to Him. If God doesn't have the final say in every decision of your life, including who you date, where you work, and how you spend your money, He's not really your Lord. You can't make Him Lord of certain areas and retain control of other areas. He says, 'I will either be Lord of all or not at all.

1. God will speak to us. But the real question is: “Are we listening to Him? Do we have ‘ears to hear’ (Revelation 2:11)?” What do you think is the evidence that we are hearing and listening to what God is saying to us?
2. Throughout Scripture God assures us of His presence and power at work in our lives. Read Psalm 139:7-12. In what situation do you need to be reminded of God's presence this week?
3. We must submit ourselves continually to Jesus Christ's Lordship in our lives—humbly acknowledging that He alone is our Master and Commander, and then obediently doing whatever He says. What does it mean for us to be inwardly as well as outwardly submissive to the Lord?

PRAYER: Close in prayer by thanking God for His constant presence in our lives through His Holy Spirit. Pray that as we grow more aware of His presence and its implication for our lives, we would become people who learn to worship God more.

“See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him. If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you.” {Exodus 23:20-22}