

God Gives the Victory

June 26, 2011

Vol. 1 Num. 7

JOSHUA 5:13-6:27

This Week's Core Competency:

Salvation by Grace: I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift— not from works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Using This Study

① EXPERIENCE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. Ask God to help you focus on the passage and hear from Him as you read His word.

② EXAMINE His Word

The words God uses to communicate matters. Go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

③ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface both the Divine and human author's point in the passage.

④ EXPAND His Word

How does this FIT? Studying cross references can expand your understanding of a passage and discover the unity in God's word.

⑤ EMBRACE His Word

We study God's word to hear from Him. Embracing God's word is when we personally RESPOND to Him in obedience.

Introduction

Have you noticed the strange way God involves His people in His work?

In a meeting with a small group of missionaries in China, James Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission (now Overseas Missionary Fellowship) reminded them that there were three ways to do God's work:

"One is to make the best plans we can, and carry them out to the best of our ability ... or, having carefully laid our plans and determined to carry them through, we may ask God to help us, and to prosper us in connection with them. Yet another way of working is to begin with God; to ask His plans, and to offer ourselves to Him to carry out His purposes."

-- Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Biography of James Hudson Taylor*

This third way is the manner in which God calls His people to serve, but why? Is it that our God is a megalomaniac concerned only with elevating his own sense of worth? Is it that we as fallen people are completely incapable of doing any good for His kingdom?

Of course, we can take comfort in the truth that our God is not an ego-driven ogre, nor does He blindly invalidate our contribution to His work. The problem is with us and the way we approach the work: *We often approach the work of God with the intention of gaining the victory instead working from the position of victory.*

This Week

In approaching Jericho, the Israelites and the Canaanites discover and unmistakable lesson. God gives the victory. In fact, God makes it clear to His people throughout biblical history that His enemy and our enemy is sin and that He has already won the victory! His people are to simply obey Him and possess it.

1 EXPERIENCE His Word

Read the passage and experience God's word personally.

13 When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in His hand. Joshua approached Him and asked, "Are You for us or for our enemies?"

14 "Neither," He replied. "I have now come as commander of the LORD's army." Then Joshua bowed with his face to the ground in worship and asked Him, "What does my Lord want to say to His servant?"

15 The commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

16 Now Jericho was strongly fortified because of the Israelites— no one leaving or entering.

17 The LORD said to Joshua, "Look, I have handed Jericho, its king, and its fighting men over to you.

18 March around the city with all the men of war, circling the city one time. Do this for six days.

19 Have seven priests carry seven ram's-horn trumpets in front of the ark. But on the seventh day, march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the trumpets.

20 When there is a prolonged blast of the horn and you hear its sound, have all the people give a mighty shout. Then the city wall will collapse, and the people will advance, each man straight ahead."

21 So Joshua son of Nun summoned the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant and have seven priests carry seven trumpets in front of the ark of the LORD."

22 He said to the people, "Move forward, march around the city, and have the armed troops go ahead of the ark of the LORD."

23 After Joshua had spoken to the people, seven priests carrying seven trumpets before the LORD moved forward and blew the trumpets; the ark of the LORD's covenant followed them.

24 While the trumpets were blowing, the armed troops went in front of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard went behind the ark.

25 But Joshua had commanded the people: "Do not shout or let your voice be heard. Don't let one word come out of your mouth until the time I say, 'Shout!' Then you are to shout."

26 So the ark of the LORD was carried around the city, circling it once. They returned to the camp and spent the night there.

27 Joshua got up early the next morning. The priests took the ark of the LORD,

28 and the seven priests carrying seven trumpets marched in front of the ark of the LORD. While the trumpets were blowing,

the armed troops went in front of them, and the rear guard went behind the ark of the LORD.

29 On the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

30 Early on the seventh day, they started at dawn and marched around the city seven times in the same way. That was the only day they marched around the city seven times.

31 After the seventh time, the priests blew the trumpets, and Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city.

32 But the city and everything in it are set apart to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and everyone with her in the house will live, because she hid the men we sent.

33 But keep yourselves from the things set apart, or you will be set apart for destruction. If you take any of those things, you will set apart the camp of Israel for destruction and bring disaster on it.

34 For all the silver and gold, and the articles of bronze and iron, are dedicated to the LORD and must go into the LORD's treasury."

35 So the people shouted, and the trumpets sounded. When they heard the blast of the trumpet, the people gave a great shout, and the wall collapsed. The people advanced into the city, each man straight ahead, and they captured the city.

36 They completely destroyed everything in the city with the sword— every man and woman, both young and old, and every ox, sheep, and donkey.

37 Joshua said to the two men who had scouted the land, "Go to the prostitute's house and bring the woman out of there, and all who are with her, just as you promised her."

38 So the young men who had scouted went in and brought out Rahab and her father, mother, brothers, and all who belonged to her. They brought out her whole family and settled them outside the camp of Israel.

39 They burned up the city and everything in it, but they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the LORD's house.

40 However, Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, her father's household, and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent to spy on Jericho, and she lives in Israel to this day.

41 At that time Joshua imposed this curse: The man who undertakes the rebuilding of this city, Jericho, is cursed before the LORD. He will lay its foundation at the cost of his firstborn; he will set up its gates at the cost of his youngest.

42 And the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

What are your first impressions?

2 EXAMINE His Word

- ✎ Enumerate each of the instructions given by God to Joshua in vv. 3-5.
- ✎ Count the number of times “ark” is used in these passages and write the number here _____.

- ✎ Circle each occurrence of the words “six” and “seven” or “seventh.”
- ✎ Underline the phrases “set apart, “set apart for destruction” and “completely destroyed.”

③ EXPLORE His Word

1. Read Joshua 5:13-15. Who appeared to Joshua and why?
2. In verse 2, what do you notice about the verb tense in the Lord’s statement to Joshua?
3. Why did the Lord speak to Joshua in this tense?
4. Why do you think that God gave all these complicated instructions for the battle against Jericho?

④ EXPAND His Word

5. Looking at this passage and Deuteronomy 20:16-18, why did God command Israel to destroy almost everything and everyone in Jericho?
6. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 and Hebrews 11:30. How do these verses apply to:
 - a) the fall of Jericho?
 - b) Rahab and her family being spared (Joshua 6:17, 22-23)?
 - c) believers today?

⑤ EMBRACE His Word

The Bible reveals God’s word and the Holy Spirit uses it to instruct, correct, encourage, and mature people into fully-devoted followers of Christ. Responding to Him means living in light of His Word (obedience).

7. What was Joshua's response in 5:15 and how might his attitude (and posture) be an example to us?

8. As believers, we have been given a new life with God. Is there an area in your life that hinders your relationship to God? If so, what will you do about it?

9. Read verse 20 again. God desires to break down the walls that separate us from an abundant life in Christ. What "impossible wall" does God want to destroy in your life or the life of a loved one?

Journal your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to KNOW...

Write about how God wants you to FEEL...

Write about what God wants you to DO...

Sermon Notes:

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.