

Jos210 – The First Battle in The Promised Life – Joshua 6:1-27  
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Open your Bibles. Title of the message, “The First Battle in The Promised Life.” We are going to do all of Joshua Chapter 6 this message.

When I say, “The First Battle in The Promised Life” (I’m talking about the Battle of Jericho) I don’t mean the first battle chronologically. I mean (much more) first in priority. It is the first in priority battle in the Promised Life.

Before we can begin to walk in victory in the Promised Life, we have to know

- 1) WHAT the first priority battle IS
- 2) HOW to WIN that “first priority battle”

I believe the first priority battle for living victoriously in the Promised Life is the battle of FAITH versus SELF-WILL. It’s the battle of the SPIRIT versus the FLESH. To me, this will always be the first priority battle for living victoriously in the Promised Life.

Are you living a FAITH directed life?  
Or are you living a SELF-directed life?

Are you being led by the SPIRIT?  
Or are you being led by the FLESH?

To me, *that* will always be the first priority battle.

Let’s pray. *Heavenly Father, please show us. Lord, through your living and powerful Word, convict us and confirm in us, reveal to us the first priority battle that we must face in order to begin walking victoriously in the Promised Life. And show us how to do it, Lord. Show us the battle; show us how you would have us win it. For your glory, for your sake and in your name, amen.*

So we looked at what (to me) will always be the first priority battle – the battle of faith versus self-will – so let’s summarize how we win that first priority battle. I believe victory in this first priority battle can be summed up in two words – FAITH and FOLLOW.

Winning the first priority battle over self-will and the flesh nature is dependent on two things.

- 1) FAITH in God’s methods**
- 2) FOLLOWING God’s ways**

**FAITH in God's methods** – NOT our own methods  
**FOLLOWING God's ways** – NOT our own ways

The truth is, we as Church attending, Bible reading Christians most often actually come up with our *own* methods and follow our own ways for living the Christian life. And then, we are pretty good at convincing ourselves (and others) that our *own* methods and ways are actually *God's* methods and ways.

So the Battle of Jericho was the first priority battle in the Promised Land for God's People. And we all have that daunting enemy of Jericho standing between us and the Promised Life.

I believe the first and in a practical sense, the greatest enemy that we all face is the ever daunting enemy of self-will and the flesh nature. Every one of us has this Jericho enemy standing between us and the Promised Life. And then often our spiritual enemy (the demonic forces in this world) capitalizes on our self-will and our flesh nature to create a seemingly even more daunting enemy.

But the truth is our enemy – just like the enemy in Jericho – is deathly afraid of the power of God.

We start today in Joshua 6:1.

**Joshua 6:1 (NLT)**

*I Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in.*

When we read the enemy was AFRAID of the Israelites, it means the enemy was afraid of the power of God displayed in and through the Israelites. The enemy has seen God's power on display and they are now hunkered down behind their secure wall because they know they are no match for the power of God.

Meanwhile – outside of Jericho...

When we last left Joshua he had gone out at night alone probably to survey the “Jericho problem” and to develop his military strategy. And right there Joshua learned a critical *pre-requisite lesson* for winning this first priority battle. Here was the pre-requisite lesson (from our last message).

It is the Commander of the Army of the Lord who is in charge- *not us*.

And our job (like Joshua's) is first

RECOGNIZE the Lord is actually IN CHARGE

and then to WORSHIP him  
and then be willing to HEAR what he says to you.

That is what Joshua did in Chapter 5. But the chapter break between 5 and 6 is a little unfortunate because it's actually at the beginning of Chapter 6 that we see what the Lord commands Joshua to do in this first priority battle.

But notice – before the Lord tells Joshua what to do the Lord tells him what has already been done on his behalf.

**Joshua 6:2 (NLT)**

***2 But the Lord said to Joshua, “I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors.***

First, the Lord says to you today, “***This Victory has already been WON.***” Where it matters (in the spiritual realm) your victory is complete – it is finished.

We enter our Jericho battle from a position of victory not to *gain victory* but because we are *already victorious*.

***...the Lord said to Joshua, “I have given you - Jericho”***

But that doesn't mean we don't have a part, we do! In fact, us doing our part is what determines whether we will ever “take possession” of the victory that Christ has already won on our behalf.

And so for his part in this victory Joshua does not hear...

His **Own Methods**

His **Own Ideas**

His **Own Strategies**

He hears something from the Lord that he would never, ever even consider. Joshua hears the *Lord's method* for victory. He hears the *Lord's ways* for victory and it is radically, strikingly and directly contrary to anything Joshua would ever come up with himself.

Have you realized yet that when you are “actually” hearing God's methods and God's ways for victory in your life that it is most often *radically – strikingly – and directly contrary* to anything you would ever come up with yourself?

Imagine Joshua as Captain of the Army of Israel with battle training and battle experience. He's planning his attack and he is confident that he can come up with a good approach. And then, he comes face to face with the Lord (as Commander of the Lord's

Army) and suddenly everything changes and Joshua hears what he would consider a totally crazy idea.

Here is the Lord's method and the Lord's plan for the Lord's victory.

**Joshua 6:3–5 (NLT)**

***3 You and your fighting men should march around the town once a day for six days.  
4 Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns.  
5 When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams' horns, have all the people shout as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town."***

This text is not written just so Sunday School teachers can have a fun story to tell our kids. This event happened with *historical and archeological proof* in order to make it perfectly clear to God's people in *that* day and to God's people *today* HOW all victories in the Promised Land are won! Here in this text are all the principles for victory God's way in all our battles in the Promised Land.

Don't miss it!

First, Joshua worshiped and heard from the Lord (as the Commander of Heaven's Army). And what Joshua heard was *radically – strikingly – and directly contrary* to anything Joshua would ever come up with himself. It was so radical and so contrary to human thinking that it sounded crazy – which makes Joshua's next move very critical.

Remember, how we win the first priority battle is to have faith in *God's methods* and follow *God's ways* and that is exactly what Joshua is going to do.

**Joshua 6:6–7 (NLT)**

***6 So Joshua called together the priests and said, "Take up the Ark of the Lord's Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn."  
7 Then he gave orders to the people: "March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the Lord."***

Remember WHAT the Ark of the Covenant IS. It is the Presence of God *with* his people.

This is the exact same method God instructed Joshua to use in order to cross the uncrossable Jordan River. At the Jordan the command was take up the Presence of God and go stand in the insurmountable problem. Here, it is take up the Presence of God and march around the enemy. The Ark of the Covenant (the Presence of God) has been central in *both* of these critical passages because it is the Presence of God that brings

victory in insurmountable problems like the Jordan and against daunting enemies like Jericho.

And so we continue.

### **Joshua 6:8–9 (NLT)**

***8 After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams' horns started marching in the presence of the Lord (I like that), blowing the horns as they marched. And the Ark of the Lord's Covenant followed behind them.***

***9 Some of the armed men marched in front of the priests with the horns and some behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns.***

Notice the focus on the Presence of the Lord and the Ark of the Lord's Covenant. And notice the Presence of the Lord travels with a full horn section. I can't tell you enough that the spiritual battle is won *in* the presence of the Lord and *in* worship.

And then comes on of the most critical instructions possible when facing a Jericho enemy.

The instruction (in verse 10) is this:

### **In the midst of your spiritual battles**

**Keep your mouth **SHUT****

**Until God tells you to **SPEAK****

### **Joshua 6:10 (NLT)**

***10 "Do not shout; do not even talk," Joshua commanded. "Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!"***

Obeying this one command would prevent countless devastating losses in the church. ***Do not even talk – not a single word*** until you *know* the Lord has commanded you to talk.

And so the battle begins on the Lord's terms – the first day.

### **Joshua 6:11 (NLT)**

***11 So the Ark of the Lord was carried around the town once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp.***

After perfect obedience the first day – NOTHING HAPPENED – ***everyone returned to spend the night in the camp***

We did what God commanded but nothing happened – now what?

We KEEP having FAITH in *God's methods*  
and we KEEP FOLLOWING *God's ways*.

**Joshua 6:12–14 (NLT)**

***12 Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the Lord.***

***13 The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the Lord, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the Lord. All this time the priests were blowing their horns.***

***14 On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp . . .***

Second day – doing exactly what the Lord commanded with the result – nothing – same as the first day. So, what do you do?

We KEEP having FAITH in *God's methods*  
and we KEEP FOLLOWING *God's ways*.

**Joshua 6:14(b) (NLT)**

***14 . . .They followed this pattern for six days.***

But it could've been six weeks, or six months, or six years. We must have FAITH in *God's methods* and FOLLOW *God's ways* for six days, or weeks or months or years... because at some point the SEVENTH DAY will come!!

**Joshua 6:15–16 (NLT)**

***15 On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times.***

***16 The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the town!"***

In God's time  
with FAITH in God's METHOD  
and FOLLOWING God's ways...

At some point the Lord tells you ***SHOUT – For the Lord has Given you Victory in this Battle.***

The seventh day WILL COME  
and God WILL give you the command to shout  
and God WILL deliver you from that enemy.

And when he does  
it will be *HIS WAY!*  
And it will be *HIS GLORY!*

And you will be forever changed by it.

Skip down to Joshua 6:20

**Joshua 6:20 (NLT)**

***20 When the people heard the sound of the rams' horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it.***

VICTORY in the *first priority battle* in the Promised Land.

And it was accomplished  
by FAITH in God's *methods*  
and by FOLLOWING God's *ways*

no matter how

Radically – Strikingly – and directly Contrary – God's methods and ways would seem to us. And that is the lesson that will apply to all of your battles as you learn to live victoriously in the Promised Life.

True victory in the Promised Life comes  
by FAITH in God's *methods*  
and by FOLLOWING God's *ways*.

But – there is one more part of this victory that we must look at and acknowledge. Back in verse 17, there is additional instruction from the Lord about what to do after God brings the victory.

**Joshua 6:17 (NLT)**

***17 Jericho and everything in it must be completely destroyed as an offering to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies.***

Remember Rahab from Chapter 2? Well here she is protected (because of her faith) and she joins the family of Israel and she becomes the great grandmother of King David, which is another wonderful story.

But – the Hebrew word translated here as *destroyed as an offering to the Lord* is a word meaning to “*set something apart*” or (devote it) to the Lord either by destruction or as an offering.

Verses 18-19 help clarify it.

**Joshua 6:18–19 (NLT)**

***18 “Do not take any of the things set apart for destruction, or you yourselves will be completely destroyed, and you will bring trouble on the camp of Israel.***

***19 Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron is sacred to the Lord and must be brought into his treasury.”***

What’s the point of this destruction as an offering to the Lord? Well, there are other things I could explain but let me focus on just one thing. We have to be as careful how we handle the victory as we are in how we handle the battle.

Jericho is the first priority battle for Israel and in it is the lesson for all battles in the Promised Land. And here, God is making it clear there can be NO COMPROMISE with sin, no “half-way” victory.

When God delivers a “Jericho victory” for you he doesn’t want you going back and reviving the enemy that he’s just conquered on your behalf. God does not bring you supernatural victory so that you can hang on to a portion of the enemy. We must allow God to destroy all of that enemy that he has conquered for us.

So the first priority battle in the Promised Life is the Jericho Battle where we must learn to have FAITH in *God’s methods* – above our own – and to FOLLOW *God’s ways* – above our own.

And once we begin to do that, *then* we can begin to walk from victory to victory in the Promised Life.

As Joshua 6:27 says,

**Joshua 6:27 (NLT)**

***27 So the Lord was with Joshua, and his reputation spread throughout the land.***

Let’s pray. *Lord Jesus, thank you. Thank you for the beginning of a new season next week as we move to two services. Thank you for your Word. Thank you for this first priority battle. Thank you. Thank you, Lord, for loving us no matter what, even if we have returned to our sin like a dog returns to its vomit, you still love us! We can’t get away from your love and we can’t get away from your presence. But Lord, we say give us the*



*faith in your methods. And give us the power by your Spirit to follow your ways. And Lord, we commit right now, about the area in our life that needs your victory over the first priority battle.*

*Lord, I'm sorry. Forgive me. I know what the Jericho battle is in my life. I know what the daunting enemy is in my life. And I pray, Lord, that you would enable me by your Spirit, by your Presence, to conquer this first priority battle. Please give me victory Lord. And I commit today to follow your methods and to follow your ways. Reveal them to me and pour out your Spirit on me to enable me to live for your glory. It's in your name I pray Jesus, amen.*