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Joshua 6:15-27
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The Judgment of Jericho

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think some people are uncomfortable with the judgment of God?
2. Is anything about God's character make him a good one to be judge? Who else could be a righteous judge of all mankind?
3. What are different ways a loving vs. unloving parent might discipline a disobedient child? How is that like or not like God?
4. Why is it sometimes difficult for us to come to Christ for help?
5. Why do you think Joshua cursed the rebuilding of Jericho? How or why do people try to rebuild what God has taken down?

We left the Israelites walking around the walls of Jericho.

Daily they marched around the city once for six days.
They were silent, apart from the blowing of trumpets.
They carried the Ark in their midst and were armed for battle.

We are going to have spiritual battles that test our faith.

We are going to encounter issues that feel like a walled city.
We don't know how they will fall, we don't know what to do.

1. Keep marching by faith with people of faith...just keep going.
2. Keep worshiping and exalting the Lord in your heart and life
3. Keep armed with God's word and trusting what is true
4. Keep the presence of God in your midst thru the practice of repentance and obedience

But let's look at something we touched on earlier...

...The conquest of Canaan was the judgment of God.

Many people are uncomfortable with the idea of God's judgement and even more uncomfortable with the idea of God waging war or calling for the conquering of a people.

1. God created the world & therefore is the rightful judge of it.
God made it, and He judges those who live on it.

2. God is the perfect judge because He is perfect.
He is the embodiment of truth and love, He has no sin or malice

3. God's judgment is always righteous and merciful.
God judges righteously according to truth, but mercifully according to His compassion.

4. God's judgment is avoided with repentance.
God forgives those that repent or come to Him.
Jesus said those that come to Him, He will by no means cast out.

The big idea is...

Sin and continue to sin = judgment.

Sin and turn to Him = salvation.

Message Title: The Judgment of Jericho

Let's look a little more into God's discipline and judgment...

An unloved child is allowed to do anything they want.

A loved child is not allowed to do unsafe or unhealthy things and is disciplined as a protection from danger.

The sins of the Amorites and Canaanites are deep and deadly

"The Canaanites, as a whole culture, committed sins of idolatry, holy temple prostitution, adultery, homosexuality, incest, murder, bestiality, gang rape, and child sacrifice "

God literally told Abraham hundreds of years earlier that judgment would come...but their iniquity had not reached that point yet.

God also said this in **Deuteronomy 9:5**, “Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

The Canaanites are a violent sexually perverted people God will judge, but it has taken hundreds of years to get here.

**But the judgment of God is not based on...
... race or nationality but on righteousness.**

God judged the Canaanites and gave their land to Israel.

BUT...God told Israel...

...He would judge them if they defiled the land.

Later, He did, after 400 years of calling for them to change...

...God judged His own people using the wicked Babylonians.

**This book is not about how we should wage a holy war and...
...take from someone to enjoy the good life.**

**Joshua is about how we should submit to God...
...and be holy to enjoy the good life.**

GOD is the one who knows and defines what is right...

...And He is the one who judges and disciplines what is not.

This is the issue today for us.

As Christ followers, we do not judge people for their sin.

We do not condemn people for their sin.

God tells us what is right and leads to life...

...and people either trust it and follow it or they don't.

In all the hot topic issues that Christians are criticized for...

... the basis is not our moral judgments but God's.

- **Marriage being between a man and a woman.**
 - Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church
- **The sanctity of life for the unborn child.**
 - Jeremiah 1:5 God says, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born, I sanctified you; and I ordained you a prophet to the nations.
- **Male and female genders being distinct and different.**
 - Gen 5:2 He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.
- **Homosexuality as sin.**
 - Romans 1:27 "and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.
- **All sexual activity outside of marriage being sin.**
 - Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral."

God is righteous and determines righteousness...

... and judges righteously

And truly, we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We are all sinners under the judgment of God.

One way we can see this narrative is that we are all Jericho. The judgment of God is coming, and we choose our response.

I Corinthians 6:9 Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.

11 Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

The bad news is we are all guilty before a holy God.

...The good news is...

...God refrains from His righteous judgment for the repentant

Those that come to Him by faith will be forgiven.
Because Christ paid for our sin on the cross.

Remember:

The Israelites are not conquering the continent...

...God is judging the Canaanites.

This is not a strong military nation bullying a weak one...

...these are former slaves who wandered the desert for 40 years..

...about to be blessed by God because He is taking down...

... the biggest, meanest bully on the block.

This is not about race or nationality, power or prestige...

...This is about God's judgment on sin and sinners...

...Canaanite or Jew, me or you.

6:15 But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. 16 And the seventh time it happened, when

the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people:
“Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!
17 Now the city shall be doomed by the Lord to destruction, it and
all who are in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all
who are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers
that we sent.

So here we see both sides of the same coin.

1. Judgement and mercy come from God.

The city of Jericho is under the judgment of God...
...**But** the house of Rahab, receives mercy.

Next we get a very important command and clue...

18 And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest
you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and
make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. 19 But all the
silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated
to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.”

The firstborn belongs to the Lord.

The first fruit of the harvest belongs to the Lord.

The first city of the Promised Land belongs to the Lord.

This city is an offering to God, it is holy, set apart for Him.

2. The Lord first works best.

**Any group that does not trust and follow its head/leader...
...is headed for trouble.**

God has established His authority and order because...
...that is what is best for them and for us.

God is establishing His place as the Savior and Lord.

God gives the victory, and they recognize it belongs to God.
When we think we can do it on our own, we get into trouble.

**Everything belongs to the Lord.
The “accursed thing” is dedicated to destruction
...while the "precious things" are dedicated to the Lord.**

3. All we have is for the Lord.

...Either destroyed or dedicated.

When the Lord saves us...when He conquers our hearts...

...There are unholy and unhealthy things that need to go.

Before you came to Christ...

...you were sleeping with your girlfriend or boyfriend...

...you were angry or lazy or careless or selfish...

...You lied, or you cheated, you did what you had to to get ahead.

Before you came to Christ...

...ultimately you lived for your own glory and pleasure...

...you lived in and practiced sin.

And when we come to Christ...

...we need to devote those things to destruction

Rahab didn't set up her prostitution business with God's people.

When we don't destroy those things...

...they bring destruction to us and in our community....

...so God brings conviction and discipline for us to change.

The things that were dedicated to Him were...

...precious metals used in the temple for the Lord.

We give **to** the Lord those precious parts of our lives...
...that can be used **for** the Lord...

These are things that can bring God glory...

Maybe you are a great musician or businessman or athlete.
Maybe the gift you have is speaking or organizing or art.
Maybe the talent you have is cooking or listening or technology.

20 So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. 21 And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

22 But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, "Go into the harlot's house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her." 23 And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. 24 But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. 25 And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26 Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates."

27 So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

4. Do not build up what God has brought down.

**If God brought down your pride, your addiction, your lust, your controlling nature, your selfish ambition, your fear...
...do not return and try to rebuild it.**

Do not return to what Christ died for.

**What God has destroyed in judgment should not be rebuilt.
But thankfully it can be redeemed...**

Hundreds of years later...

There was a blind man begging on the road crying out for mercy.

People told this poor beggar to be quiet.

But Jesus heard him and stopped and turned and called him over.

What do you want? He asked,

And the beggar said he wanted to see and Jesus healed him.

42 Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." 43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.

There may have been judgment and destruction in your past...

...but there can be life and blessing and the glory of God...

...in your future when you come to Christ as king.