

Where Faith Steps First

Joshua 3-4

Introduction:

- A. Before God gives victory, He establishes three things in our lives:
 - 1. Faith
 - 2. Holiness
 - 3. Obedience
- B. What kind of people must we be before God will entrust us with victory?
 - 1. Everybody is not prepared for victory.
 - 2. Everything changes after a victory.
 - 3. Deut. 8:11-14 Victory will test us as much as adversity.
- C. Israel stands at the edge of Jordan.
 - 1. This is not just about opposition but also opportunity.
 - 2. To get to where God wants us, something will be required of us.
 - 3. Joshua 3:5 (sanctify yourselves) We must be set apart for God.

I. God's Presence goes first.

- A. Joshua 3:3-4.
 - 1. There is no plan to follow; there is His presence to follow.
 - 2. Mark 8:34
 - 3. Faith steps first and self-steps to the side.

II. What faith requires.

- A. Joshua 3:13 (First Step)
 - 1. When leadership steps first in faith, it opens a way for others.
 - 2. Leadership obedience affects the entire congregation.
 - 3. Faith and obedience are different but inseparable.

III. God will always make a way.

- A. Joshua 3:16-17
 - 1. The nation of Israel did not assist God in the miracle.
 - 2. The nation of Israel witnessed the miracle of God.
 - 3. God's Power is revealed when His people trust Him.

IV. God calls us to remember.

- A. Joshua 4:6-7
 - 1. Anchor points in our lives are needed.
 - 2. They mark moments in our life that need to be remembered that God has always been Faithful.
 - 3. If we fail to remember what God did yesterday, we will struggle with tomorrow.

Conclusion:

Three things that occurred before sin ever occurred in their lives:

- A. God was faithful.
- B. God was clear in His instructions.
- C. God was present in their lives.

Holy Ground

Joshua 5:1-12

Introduction:

- A. What does God require of us after victory?
 - 1. Winning changes the mindset.
 - 2. We can go from humility to pride quickly.
 - 3. Victory is not the finish line; it's a checkpoint in God's plan.
- B. Israel thought crossing the Jordan was the finish line.
 - 1. The impossible had happened—they crossed on dry ground.
 - 2. They walked into the Promised Land.
 - 3. They were now standing in what God had promised.
- C. God requires holiness before and after victory.
 - 1. Before victory, God is building trust.
 - 2. After victory, God is building character.
 - 3. When Christ enters your heart, everything changes.

I. Sometimes obedience stops you in your tracks.

Joshua 5:1-2

- A. Unresolved sin must be dealt with before advancement.
- B. A victory does not cancel accountability for disobedience.
- C. God will pause your progress until obedience aligns your heart with His plan.

II. Sometimes obedience is painful.

Joshua 5:2-7

- A. The one act God required (circumcision) set Israel apart from the rest of the world.
- B. Obedience can feel painful, inconvenient, or even humiliating.
- C. God marks His people, and sometimes, through what seems uncomfortable, it is to prepare us for the next stage of His plan.

III. Sometimes obedience protects us from failure.

Joshua 5:8-12

- A. You can't advance if you are holding on to the past.
- B. God uses obedience to guard you from repeating old mistakes.
- C. Colossians 1:13 God has rescued us from darkness into His kingdom.
- D. Romans 6:6 Our old self is crucified with Christ.
- E. Philippians 1:6 God who began a good work in us will complete it.

We don't obey God to be freed from sin—we obey because He has already freed us.

Conclusion:

Victory is never the end; it's a stepping stone.