**Marching In Circles**

**Joshua 5:13-6:27 (ESV)**

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Today we’re going to continue in the story of Joshua, which really is the story of Jesus. We’re going to see that today at the end of Joshua 5. The commander of the army of the LORD appears. I believe that’s a presence of Jesus Himself, of God’s Son before He took on flesh, meeting Joshua before this whole conquest is going to begin. I’m going to read Joshua 5:13 to 6:7. If you have your Bibles or a phone or however you access the Word, I want to encourage you to open that and we’re going to just sort of take this story. It’s a very familiar story, a very loved story. We’re going to take this story and ask what do we learn about God from this event and from these Scriptures that God has given us so that we might know Him?

Remember, the people of Israel had crossed the Jordan River. It was a miracle. God made the flooded riverbed dry. They all walked across. As soon as they walked across, the river returned to flood stage. There was no turning back. They celebrated Passover. From that time, the manna stopped. They had been eating manna in the wilderness for forty years. It was a remarkable, miraculous provision of God. It stopped! It’s a new day. And now they’re not too far from the city of Jericho. It was the first city that is going to be essential for them to conquer as they receive the land God gives them. And Joshua, I think, as you would be and I would be, he is concerned and he goes for a walk. He’s thinking about, “What do we do? How do we go about this?” And so, Joshua chapter 5,

***13*** *When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?”* ***14*** *And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?”* ***15*** *And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

**Joshua 6**

***1*** *Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in.* ***2*** *And the LORD said to Joshua, “See I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor.* ***3*** *You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days.* ***4*** *Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.* ***5*** *And when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him.”* ***6*** *So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD.”* ***7*** *And he said to the people, “Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD.”*

May God encourage us through His Word, today!

In order for us to do the work of God we must know the God of the work. This work is not possible apart from God’s presence. Success in the work of God does not depend upon our resources. It does not depend upon our strength. Success in God’s work depends entirely upon God Himself. It is His work, after all.

There was a guy by the name of Zerubbabel who was given the work by God of completing the Temple after it had been destroyed. The year was around 530 BC. So it’s over 800 years after the events of Joshua chapter 5. And yet, after this Temple had been destroyed and Zerubbabel is given this task, Zerubbabel was asking, “How is this possible?” When Solomon built the first Temple, he had a huge army. He had revenue coming in from the nations all around him. He had craftsmen that he could pay. Zerubbabel had none of these things. He literally had nothing, and he was called to finish the work of completing this second Temple. God gave Zerubbabel encouragement through the prophet Zechariah. This is what the word of the LORD said to Zerubbabel.

**Zechariah 4:6** Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

Over 800 years earlier in 1400 BC, Joshua is in the same place as Zerubbabel. He is given a work by God. And frankly, it’s an impossible task. It’s not doable from a human standpoint.

I wonder, as you think about your own life and your own walk with God, if God has ever given you a work to accomplish that is so big you feel unequal to the task?Perhaps that work is sharing the Gospel with a family member. You know that they’re pretty hard-hearted about the Gospel. They’re pretty resistant. They may even be angry. Perhaps the work is discipling children who seem to be unresponsive, seem to be uncooperative. Perhaps the work is finding ways to help your home church make disciples, to share the gospel with the community during a time of a pandemic. How do you do that? I believe that God gives every disciple of Jesus a work that is bigger than the person. I believe that because that’s what Scripture says.

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

If you have been made alive in Christ, God has prepared a work that is far greater than your abilities. And He created that before you were even born so that you might have the joy of walking in that work and being part of God’s very work in this world. What do we do with God-ordained works that He has given that are bigger than ourselves? Most believers tragically walk away from these works and they live their entire lives and then they die without finishing the work that God has prepared beforehand for them to have the joy of accomplishing. Life is busy. There are so many good things to give ourselves to, so many good goals to pursue. And when we disengage from the work that God gives to us, we forfeit reward and we lose opportunity. Jesus, when He described His own life in this world, He described it this way to the Father at the end. He said

**John 17:4** I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

And as followers of Jesus, we say that’s what I want my prayer to be the day before I die. “I’ve glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave me to do.” And that’s within the reach of every one of us, to be able to have the last day we live on earth, have us pray that very prayer. What joy awaits those who finish the work God gives, and what regret awaits those who leave God’s calling on the table.

This week someone asked me whether believers would experience regret or remorse in heaven. They had listened to an earlier sermon of mine where I said that we might even shed tears on the day when we stand before Jesus at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and they were perplexed by that. So we talked about that a bit, and how God wipes away every tear. Heaven is not a place of eternal regret, and yet, the Scripture gives us a very sort of eye-opening calling when it describes this day when we stand before Jesus. It’s not to be condemned. We are all accepted in the Beloved. But we will be evaluated on the basis of faithfulness in our life of completing the work that God prepared beforehand for us to do. We read from 1 Corinthians 3, and this is what it says.

**1 Corinthians 3:12** Now if anyone builds on the foundation

The foundation is Jesus. So these are folks who have Jesus as the foundation of their life.

**1 Corinthians 3:12-13** Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each one’s work will become manifest,

When will that work become manifest or made known?

**1 Corinthians 3:13** for the Day will disclose it,

That’s the day when we stand before Jesus. How will that Day disclose our work?

**1 Corinthians 3:13** because it will be revealed by fire,

In other words, by God’s evaluation.

**1 Corinthians 3:13** and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

Every one of us, the work that we’ve given ourselves to in this life will be tested on that day by fire, God’s evaluation, Jesus’ evaluation. He goes on to say

**1 Corinthians 3:14-15** If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

So this is not a day in which we’re going to discern whether we’re condemned by God. If you’re in Christ, you have the firm foundation. We’re saved! But on that day, our work will be evaluated and we’ll be saved, but he says it will be as one snatched through the fire. So the idea there is that Jesus’ evaluation is like a fire. The life’s work, the life’s pursuits, the life’s efforts are passed through the fire and some have built on the foundation of Jesus with gold, silver and precious stones. When gold, silver and precious stones hit the fire, what happens? It endures. It passes through the fire and it comes out the other end. However, if they build with wood, hay and stubble, selfish pursuits, when they hit the fire, what happens? All that happens on the other end is ashes. And one will be rewarded and one will suffer loss. I don’t know what it means to say that we’re going to suffer loss, exactly. I just know that it means we’re going to suffer loss. In other words, we’re going to be sad about it. I don’t what all it means that we’re going to be rewarded, but I know we’re going to be really happy about it. It makes a difference what we do in this life. Just because we are forgiven and we have a home secured for us in heaven, doesn’t mean that we ought to live carelessly in this world.

So we come to Joshua, now. Joshua helps us to do a work that is impossible to our own abilities. He gives an example for us that points us to God as being the key to that kind of achievement. It’s not an achievement that comes from us, but it’s the kind of achievement in which we have availed ourselves of God Himself working through us to do that work that God intends to do, using human instruments, weak instruments, so that He would receive all the glory. Joshua 5 and 6 helps us to depend upon God for this power. Not by might, not by our own human power, but by your Spirit, says the LORD.

Here in this chapter, we’re going to chase after and look at five specific qualities about God that we as followers of Jesus Christ hold onto as we do the work of God. The more we know of God the more we will depend upon God, the more that work will be of the kind of gold, silver, and precious stones. It is our ignorance of God that tempts us to rely upon our own strength, our own wisdom, our own resources, to do God’s work. Joshua 6 reminds us that God is the hero of every story in the Bible. So if we read Joshua 6, it’s a very famous story. Those of you who are children, you’ve learned about this story from the time you’re two and three years old. And if you were asked, who is the hero of this story, of the walls of Jericho falling down? The answer is not Joshua. Joshua knows he’s not the hero of this story. The answer is the Lord. The Lord is the hero of every story in the Bible. Every battle is the Lord’s battle. No man, no other god will win against Him!

So you perhaps remember that little song that you learned as a little child, a little boy or little girl. “Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho and the walls came tumbling down.” That’s a nice, memorable song, but I am reminded by it not to take my theology from songs, because Joshua did not fight the battle of Jericho. All Joshua did was obey the Lord’s instructions and walk around the city. It was the Lord that fought the battle of Jericho. Joshua is in many ways a spectator who is just living by faith, watching God work. There are five qualities of God revealed at Jericho.

**Quality #1: God is personal. Know Him!**

This is the response that God gives to us in view of Him being personal, and this is pretty amazing! Many religions of the world would deny that idea that God is personal. When God reveals Himself, He reveals Himself as a personal God. He’s not a God who is distant, not a God who is separated, but He is a God of relationship. And so the call for us is to know Him. That’s the very purpose of life.

Jericho is the first battle that must be fought in order to receive the gift of this Promised Land. And as the people are looking at it, they see that its walls are fortified. They’re very tall. Inside, there are men of valor. They have no war machinery. There are no catapults. There are no battering rams. And everyone has to be wondering as they’re camped outside the city, “How are we going to enter that city that is a fortress? How is this going to happen?” So Joshua has this question, I believe, rolling through his heart as he goes for a walk.

***13*** *When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked,*

He’s probably thinking about that very question. “How are we going to get inside?”

*and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand.*

This man is a warrior! He has his sword, and it’s not a sword that is in his hilt. It is a sword in his hand. It is a sword drawn. And Joshua, you can imagine, had to have been unnerved by this sight. He is out there alone and here is this big mighty warrior with a sword drawn. And Joshua sees this man and he asks him a question.

*And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?”*

That’s a good question. It’s one I would ask if I saw a guy outside a city that I was supposed to lead an army against and suddenly it was him and me all alone and his sword was drawn. Are you for us or for our adversaries? In other words, is this going to be the end of me? The man apparently doesn’t look like a Canaanite, but he also doesn’t look like an Israelite. This warrior is wholly other. And Joshua doesn’t know what to do with him. He doesn’t know what category to put him. And the man responded.

***14*** *And he said, “No;*

In other words, I’m not a member of the Israelite army. I’m not a member of the Canaanite army. But here is who I am.

*but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.”*

That’s quite a statement! Now who is this stranger who claims to be the commander of the army of Yahweh? Well we ask that question when we read that story, but Joshua didn’t ask it. He experienced it. So what did Joshua immediately do? Look at the end of verse 14. It says

*And Joshua fell on his face to the earth*

Here is the guy that is perhaps the most courageous, most faith-filled man living on earth at that time. He is not a coward. And yet, when he hears who this man is, he falls flat on his face on the earth, prostrate before him

*and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?”*

He understood that here is this one whose worth and value and authority is far greater than him, and he is the commander of the armies of the Israelites. There’s no higher ranking official in all of Israel at this time. There’s no higher ranking person in all of the land of Canaan. Yet, he falls flat on his face because he knows who this is. This is God of very God. And the commander of the Lord’s army accepts his worship. He accepts Joshua’s submission. He says in fact, you need to do more.

***15*** *And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

Now in this, we remember back to Exodus 3 where when Moses meets the Lord personally, as a personal visit, he is told the same thing. He too takes off his sandals in order to draw near to God’s holiness. Why does God appear to Joshua personally? The answer is because God is personal and He engages His people in relationship, real personal intimate relationship. God knew that Joshua needed a personal encounter with Him, the living God, before Joshua could begin this impossible campaign. God called him to this place of leadership in Israel, and now He’s going to let Joshua know in the most personal ways that Joshua is not alone.

Beloved, in love, God takes the initiative to make Himself known to us and to offer relationship with us before we even ask Him. Joshua didn’t say, “God, I want a relationship.” God just simply appeared. He took the initiative in this relationship. The only way anyone can know who God is and what God is like is through God’s self-revelation of His divine person.Thankfully, God is willing to make Himself known to us. Apart from that, there couldn’t be relationship because we would never know God. You can’t be in relationship with someone you don’t know. The very first sentence in the Bible introduces us to God. It says

**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

From the first sentence, what do we learn about God? We learn He is omnipotent. We learn He is all powerful. He is a Being who can make something out of nothing. Let me ask you, can you do that? Can you make something out of nothing? Do you know anyone or anything else that can do that? The answer is no. You see, something can only come from Someone who has the power to make something out of nothing. Left to itself, nothing will always lead to nothing. And the only reason why there is something is because Someone who is eternal, who is self-existent, who is sovereign, who is all-powerful spoke and something came into being. As we look around creation, we say, why is this here? This didn’t come from nothing. Something never comes from nothing. God is the all-powerful God and He set His fingerprints of His power, of His creative energy all around us as testimony of His Person.

Left with Genesis 1:1, we would be in awe of God. We would be terrified of God. We would place ourselves under in submission to God because we are creature and He is Creator. But we wouldn’t draw near to God if Genesis 1:1 is all that happened. Thankfully, Genesis 1 continues to tell us that when He made man, He made man in His own image, His own likeness. What does that mean? It means He made man in such a way that He could walk with Adam and Eve in the garden, talking with each other, Him revealing Himself and Him sharing His love and blessing to them in the cool of the day every day. And that’s what God created us for. God is personal. Isn’t that amazing!

Adam and Eve messed it up by deciding that they could live life better without God on their own terms and sin entered the world. And once sin entered the world, sin affected so much. Everything wrong in this world can be traced back right to that day; everything corrupt, everything dark. And yet, the greatest thing that happened is that it severed man’s relationship with God and it placed inside of us an incapacity, it robbed us of the ability in our natural persons to know God. When we’re born, all of us, like sheep, have gone astray. We all wander away from God. We don’t want to know Him. Each one of us has turned to his own way. So one reason that sin is so destructive to our soul is that it darkened our minds so we would never know God and it twisted our will so that we wouldn’t even want to know Him. No one seeks after God, the Bible says. Not in ourselves. And yet God, in His mercy continues to seek after us and offer relationship through His Son, Jesus. When Jesus prayed in John 17, He said

**John 17:3** And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

If you really want to know about eternal life, it’s not about golden streets. It’s not about living a long time in a very lovely place. Eternal life, if you really want to know its essence, is about knowing God. That’s what it is. And Joshua needed to be reminded at the outset that God is personal.

Let me ask you, do you know God? That’s the place to begin. We don’t have any work that is given us that is eternally meaningful until we have a real relationship with Him. And God offers us that real relationship in Christ. He says

**John 1:12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

Here’s the application. When God calls you to some impossible work, know that He is personally with you and that that relationship you have with God is central to everything. When you are chasing after the work that God has prepared beforehand for you to accomplish, your work is His work and He will see that it comes to pass. He is the One who leads us personally. Amen!

**Quality #2: God is holy. Worship Him!**

***15*** *And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

While God is personal, He is not like us. He is different from us. He is altogether righteous. He is perfect in every way. When we start leaning into this idea that God is personal, we must not think of God as somehow a peer, one of us. We are not His equals. We are His servants. We are His children. Joshua knew well the story of Moses meeting God at the burning bush near Mount Sinai. When He called on Moses, He appeared in this burning bush.

**Exodus 3:5** Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

It’s very similar to what Joshua experiences here right outside of Jericho. Notice that both of these men had similar responses to the revelation of God’s holiness. They both fell on their faces. They both took off their shoes in His presence because the ground itself was holy. Why is the ground holy? Why is that dirt holy? Because God is locally present. That’s the reason why. God’s presence made even the ground holy. Both Joshua and Moses know that God inspires wonder and awe and devotion and trembling. Both know that God is separate from them, that He is transcendent to them, that they are not worthy to be in His presence.

Let me ask you, do you know God like that? Have you grasped His holiness? You see,God’s holiness makes us aware that life is not about us. Life is about God. When we approach God, we approach Him with reverence, with wonder, with awe, in absolute, abject humility. We take off our shoes because we realize I don’t have worthiness for even my shoes to step on this ground. Because I am in my shoes, I have made my shoes unclean. And when I approach God, I approach Him in His holiness, in my neediness. We forget about ourselves and we discover that life will never be experienced by looking within ourselves when we see God in His holiness.

Here’s the application. When God calls you to some impossible work, remind yourself that this work is a reasonable act of worship. The one who calls you to that work is holy, holy, holy! God is personal. Let’s know Him. Let’s feed that relationship we have with Him. God is holy. Let’s worship Him. Let us treat Him as God.

**Quality #3: God is gracious. Believe in Him!**

Look at verses 1 and 2 now. I don’t think that this is a very good separation of chapters. Chapter divisions were made by man, not by God. And so I believe that the LORD here that speaks to Joshua is the same as the commander of the armies of the LORD’s hosts. It’s the same person speaking, still. There is not a change of scenery.

***1*** *Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in.* ***2*** *And the LORD said to Joshua, “See I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor.*

Notice that the LORD speaks in the past tense about a gift that they’ve not yet received. He says, “I have given Jericho into your hand.” Well, they’re not inside Jericho. The enemy is still residing in Jericho. And yet, God speaks as though this gift that He had promised them has already been given. Only God can speak like that.

We’re presumptuous when we tell people plans that we have for the next five minutes. “I plan to go home after the service.” Well, that’s presumptuous. How do you know you’re going to go home after the service? We’re presumptuous because we are so weak, that we’re not even in control of the next heartbeat. Before I finish this sentence, this word, I could just (snaps fingers). So it’s presumptuous of me to say I’m going to finish this message. I can’t say that. Only God can say that because God is eternal and God is absolutely sovereign in everything. That’s why He says it has already happened.

Notice His grace! This promise that was given 500 years earlier to a 75 year old pagan named Abraham, is now coming to fruition. And why are this people a people? Because of grace. And why are this people blessed with the land? Because of grace. Because God is gracious. He takes pity on us and promises to bless us even though we don’t deserve it.

Think about this people. This was a people that all through the wilderness wandering they grumbled, they complained, they worshiped a golden calf. They did all kinds of nonsense for forty years. And yet now, God still says to this people, “Here’s the land. I’ve already given it to you.” Why would God do that? Because He is gracious. It’s not because the people deserved it. It’s because He is the God of all grace.

We don’t deserve to receive anything from the Lord. We deserve only judgment. God looks down from heaven upon us sinful creatures and in grace, He offers us His very own Son. What grace! That’s the God who reveals Himself to Joshua. He offers us His Son to be our suffering Savior, to be our perfect Redeemer, to be our loving Shepherd, to be our victorious King, to be our eternal Friend. Friend, what must you do to receive this grace? The answer is that grace is a gift that must be received through faith. Not every Israelite received the blessing of this land. Grace from God is a gift that must be received through an open hand of humble faith. Without faith, God’s grace offered to us in Christ just rolls right off our hands and right into the ground.

Friend, grasp God’s goodness by faith. God is a gracious God. Why would you spend another day not receiving the grace that He offers you to be infinitely blessed now and forever? Yet many walk away from God because they don’t believe that God is sovereign. They don’t believe that He is gracious. They believe that they could find another path in life that will be more fulfilling, more joyful, more pleasant. Joshua understood, “Here is the God of all grace standing before me and He’s offering me an inheritance.” God proves His love for us when He sent His Son, Jesus, to die upon the cross. He demonstrates His love. He demonstrates His graciousness.

I love what Romans says. Paul picks up on this idea. Think about that. God’s grace is so great that He didn’t spare even His own Son in order to bring blessing to us. And Paul says

**Romans 8:32** He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

If He gives us His Son, how will He not also graciously give us all things?

Friend, have you been believing some foolish lie that whispers in your ear, “God is not fair. God is cruel. God is not good”? God has proven His gracious character throughout all time. He has not hidden His acts of grace. He has put them on public display. His fingerprints of grace can readily be seen by even an untrained eye.

Here’s the application. When God calls you to some impossible work, know that He will graciously give you all things you need. He won’t allow your labors to be empty.

**Quality #4: God is instructive. Listen to Him!**

Verses 3-5 are these instructions about what the people are to do in order to receive the blessing of this city, the blessing of Jericho. We’ve read this part of the story. If you think about what is happening in this story, you see that there are first armed men. So picture this. They’re to walk around the city. It’s going to take about 25 minutes. It’s not a huge city. It’ll take 25 minutes for all of them to walk around it. The first people in line are the armed men. And then there are the priests and they have these trumpets. So picture that. And then there is the ark of the covenant, representing the presence of God. And then finally, there is the unarmed guard that follows. So that’s the procession; armed guard, priests with trumpets, ark of the covenant, unarmed guard. And they walk around the city one time every day until the seventh day, when they walk around it seven times. And then they blow the trumpets and they make the shout and the walls will come down.

Now, the point here about who is God, that Joshua is understanding and learning is that God is the God who speaks. He’s the God who gives us instructions. You know, sometimes people ask the question “How do I know the will of the Lord?” God is not going to be silent to you. If you honestly are saying, “I want to do the will of the Lord. I want to do these works that God has prepared for me,” know that God will speak and He speaks through His Word, by His Spirit. So open up the Bible and begin to read the Bible with a responsive heart, a willingness to obey. I will guarantee you that there is no person that has ever lived who has followed Jesus, who has opened up the Bible and said, “God, I just want to do your will, so I’m going to read, read, read, and allow your Spirit to speak to me.” Not one person like that has ever come to the end of their life and said, “Well, I guess I missed it. I missed God’s will for me.” Not one! I know that we want sometimes things to be much more specific, like, this is the girl you’re to marry, this is the guy you’re to marry, this is the job you’re to take. Open up the Word and trust the Lord. He is a God of instruction and He instructs us through His Word, by His Spirit. He will absolutely lead you along the path. There’s no question!

God gives instructions though that seem, quite frankly, to a military commander, to be nonsensical. This doesn’t make sense. Faith is required to listen to God speak. Faith is required. “I’m just going to trust you, God.” When we stop listening to God speak to us through His Word, we are in deep trouble. It’s necessary for us as a church to say, “We want to have ears to hear. What are our marching orders, Lord?”

When any church in any time stops asking the present question, what is God telling us in this season, right now? If we stop asking that with an open Bible and a ready heart to obey, we’re lost. We start asking a whole bunch of other questions that I think, quite frankly, are really foolish. We ask questions like, “How do we feel about this? What do other people feel about this? What do our traditions say? What have we done in the past? What is culturally relevant? What is going to cause the world to think that we somehow are nice people? What is going to cause more people to come? What is going to appeal to a worldly mindset so that once they get here, then perhaps maybe something good will happen. We ask all those silly questions, when God would say, here’s the question. It’s the first question. What is God saying to His church? As we seek Him with an open Bible, humble hearts, readiness for the Spirit, God is an instructive God. He is a God who speaks.

God is personal. Let’s know Him. He’s holy. Let’s worship Him. He’s gracious. Let’s believe in Him. He’s instructive. Let’s listen to Him. And finally,

**Quality #5: God is victorious. Count on Him!**

Let’s rely on Him. So, here we have it. They follow the commands of the Lord. They walk in faith. In verse 15 and following, it tells us that

***16*** *And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city.*

***20*** *So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat,*

That’s fascinating isn’t it, to just be there to see that happen! What caused the walls to fall flat? The answer is the commander of the LORD’s army; His power. Jesus is our undefeated Commander. He has never once been overcome by a more powerful force and He never will. Friend, if you wish to be on the side of victory at the end of the age, you must follow Jesus. He is the victorious King!

Beloved, we can rely on Jesus. I know that oftentimes it feels like Jesus is losing. That’s the problem on the Friday when Jesus was crucified and all the disciples, that’s what they were feeling. “Well, I guess He was defeated.” Any defeats that appear to us in this world, a defeat for God is not a defeat. It is part of God’s plan to bring Himself the most glory at the end of the age when He brings victory. Paul asks

**Romans 8:31** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

**Romans 8:37** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

The battle is the Lord’s to win, and win it He will!

Here’s the application.When God calls you to some impossible work, know that He will bring success to that work regardless of the impossibilities.

**1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

And why do you know that? Because Jesus is King. He’s sovereign. He is the victor!

I want to take us back just as we close this. I trust that we’re learning about God. It’s really what the Christian life is about. It’s learning about God. And we’re learning so much about this God who is and who is present with us as we face various battles and as we go about doing the work of God that God has given us to do, like He gave to Joshua. But I want to go back to this issue of God being gracious because it appears here in verses 22-25 in the person of Rahab.

***22*** *But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.”* ***23*** *So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel.* ***24*** *And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.* ***25*** *But Rahab the prostitute and her father’s household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.*

God in His righteousness exercised His righteous judgment. That’s what is happening here in Jericho. God is exercising judgment. It’s not Joshua exercising judgment; it’s God. We’re going to trace through that issue more in the weeks ahead. But here, understand that Rahab was not more righteous than the other people of Jericho. In fact, it says over and over again, “Rahab the prostitute.” Almost every time her name is mentioned, it says, “Rahab the prostitute.” It could be argued that she may be one of the more disobedient unrighteous people. And yet, here she is. She is rescued. And not only her, but also her family and everybody who is with her. Why? Why is Rahab rescued? The answer is because she believed in the Yahweh of grace. She believed that God would be gracious to her if she looked to Him in faith. And notice that she must have encouraged other people to believe in Yahweh, too. She felt that that was her responsibility. “I’ve gotta get as many people as I possibly can to hear about this God of grace and to believe in Him so that they will not be destroyed when the day comes for Jericho’s walls to fall.”

Beloved, Jericho’s walls one day will fall. In other words, there is a judgment day. It’s unavoidable. It’s absolutely certain. And it might feel like it’s a long way away, but Rahab didn’t wait for the day to start talking to her family. She had been talking to her family from the day that those spies visited her and she was successful and used by God so that people in her own household, her mom, her dad, her brothers, and everybody who was with her, were some of those who were delivered from the righteous indignation and wrath of God on Jericho. Here’s the issue. If Rahab as a prostitute is saved, rescued, delivered, why not you? We are no better or worse than Rahab. The grace that is available to Rahab is available to us if we look to the one who is gracious. Look to Jesus Christ who died in our place.

Do you refuse to believe that the God of Israel is righteous? Do you refuse to believe that there really never is going to be a day of reckoning? Do you refuse to believe that the God of Israel is gracious and that while there may be a day of reckoning, you’re too far gone? Beloved, look to God, for He is a God of grace. He responds to everyone who humbly believes.

**Zechariah 4:6** Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.