



“CROSSING OUR JORDAN RIVER!!”

- Our **mission** is to *Reach* people in the Name of Jesus; *Disciple* people in the Way of Jesus; *Empower* people in the Service of Jesus.
 - Our **method** is to ensure that everything we do is *Christ Centered; Word Focused; & Ministry Minded*
 - Our **message** is *the Gospel*.
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Joshua 1:6-18

THOUGHT TO PONDER:

1) **Crossing our Jordan River requires that we follow Jesus game plan.**

Joshua 1:10-11. "Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, `Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, to possess it."

2) **Crossing our Jordan River requires that we be prepared.**

Joshua 1:8 "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth: meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

3) **To Cross our Jordan River we must ignore the distractions to our Christians walk.**

Joshua 1:7 "Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go."

4) **Crossing our Jordan River requires decisions based on our faith in who Jesus is.**

Moses said, in Numbers 32:7 "Why do you discourage the Israelites from going over in the land the Lord has given them?"

5) **Crossing our Jordan River requires that we be Christians of our word.**

Matthew 5: 37. "*But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.*"

BIBLICAL STUDY:

1) **Crossing our Jordan River requires that we follow Jesus game plan.**

Joshua 1:10-11. "*Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, to possess it.'"*"

What we just read is what I would refer as ‘the game plan’ that the Lord gave to Joshua. Most people struggle in their journey with God because they don’t have a clear understanding of What God’s plan is for their life. (Read Numbers 32:3-12)

These tribes had a different idea of what they saw was God plan for their lives. They didn’t want to go any farther because they had to move outside of their comfort zone. They wanted to stay on the wilderness side of the Jordan River. When Christians stay in the wilderness, they are saying that they don’t believe that God is really asking them to do something. It also means that they are being disobedient to the Lord, and the result is that they don’t claim their full spiritual inheritance or blessing.

The question is: "Do we as Christians want to experience God’s full blessings, or do we want to stay in the wilderness just going through life?"

God wanted the entire nation of Israel to cross over into the promise land. The promise land represents the Christian life as it ought to be. We gain victory through conflict, and our faith grows as we are obedient to the Lord. In the promise land we live a life of faith. This victorious life isn’t a once-for-all triumph that ends our problems. The victorious life is a series of conflicts and victories as we defeat one enemy after another, and claim more of our inheritance for the glory of God.

Life is a string of difficulties, and how we deal with each one shows the depth of our faith in Jesus Christ. One of the dangers of the promise land is that as the Lord blesses His children, they may have the tendency to feel that they can begin to do things on their own or by themselves. When this happens, they are more prone to Satan’s attacks simply because they are not 100 percent dependent on the Lord.

2) **Crossing our Jordan River requires that we be prepared.**

Everybody comes to the place in their life when they will have to decide whether or not they are going to cross their own personal Jordan River. When we move forward for God we're going to come under tremendous spiritual attack. That's why we need to keep our focus on God and His Word. The Lord told Joshua how he was to prepare himself for what was coming.

Joshua 1:8 "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth: meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

Why is it important to focus on the God and His Word? Because not only does Israel's (and our) joy, strength and courage come from meditating on the Word of God, believing its promises, and obeying its precepts; but we get our direction from the Word of God.

Paul said in Corinthians that our battle is not with flesh and blood, but that we are engaged in a battle between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom that Satan is trying to set up. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness Jesus defeated Satan by using the power of the Word of God. When we are totally focused on God and His will, people will notice what Jesus is doing in and through our lives. If we have decided to not cross our Jordan River then that means we have failed to understand God's purpose and plan.

God's ultimate goal is that He wants you and I to become like Jesus. We may not like it, but one of the ways that this gets accomplished is by experiencing conflict. When we experience conflict and win two things should happen:

- (1) We grow stronger in our faith and in our relationship with Jesus.
- (2) We give all glory to the Lord because He gave us the victory.

When we are dealing with conflict it causes the children of the Lord to draw closer to Jesus, and to develop a deeper relationship and dependence on Him. Remember the story of David and Goliath? The nation of Israel was focusing upon the fact that Goliath was bigger than any of them. When David came along he didn't see this big character, simply because he was focused upon the Lord.

3) **To Cross our Jordan River we must ignore the distractions to our Christians walk.**

Ten of the spies that originally went over to Canaan were distracted by the size of some of the people. Joshua and Caleb refused to be distracted and diverted from God's ultimate plan. Joshua 1:7 *"Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go."*

Would you underline ‘*do not turn from it*’? In other words, God was telling them, don’t get distracted on your journey. Don’t quit and don’t take a detour! Paul wrote in Romans that we are not to allow the society to squeeze us into another mold, or way of thinking. (Romans 12:2)

King Saul and David were entering the city one day. King Saul allowed what he heard to cause him to think things about David that weren’t true. The people saw David as their warrior who defeated their enemies. Saul saw David as a threat to the throne. A lot of times I think that we Christians find ourselves on a spiritual roller coaster, and we allow some things to become a threat to our peace, walk and direction.

What are some possible distractions or things that can interfere/hinder or even become threats to our crossing our Jordan River that we might have to ignore?

- A. We don’t see something as our job/task.
- B. Allowing what our friends and/or family may say or think stop us.
- C. Fear of facing the unknown.
- D. Believing that we can’t make any difference.
- E. Rejection.
- F. Pride, being more concerned with ourselves.
- G. Don’t have the training or the education.
- H. Not seeing the need.

4) **Crossing our Jordan River requires decisions based on our faith in who Jesus is.**

Our faith decisions are based on who Jesus is; not on what we see or feel.

Look again at Numbers 32:4-5. "*The land the LORD subdued before the people of Israel — are suitable for livestock, and your servants have livestock. If we have found favor in your eyes," they said, "let this land be given to your servants as our possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan."*

The tribes based their decision to settle east of the Jordan purely by sight and what appeared best to them. They did not consider how their decision would affect their brothers and sisters who were willing to obey God and cross over the Jordan.

When we are not following the Lord’s game plan and we are doing what we want, the way we want, we are actually hurting ourselves and our fellow believers because we are being selfish. A lot of Christians think that when they rebel against God’s guidance for their lives that what they are doing is only affecting them. Here is the truth, when this happens they are affecting not only their own witness as a believer, but they are also affecting the witness of fellow believers by resisting the Spirit’s leading.

Moses said, in Numbers 32: 7. "*Why do you discourage the Israelites from going over in the land the Lord has given them?*"

A lot of times it is when Christians are discouraged in their walk with the Lord that they become easy prey for Satan, and they stumble. When making decisions they should be based on our faith in Christ and who Christ is; not on our own self-interest, feelings or emotions. I want you to notice that in the first Chapter of Joshua the Lord didn't lay down a complete plan for the people to follow. You can only get a clear vision from God when you are willing to get up and begin the process of following the Lord.

5) **Crossing our Jordan River requires that we be Christians of our word.**

So often I find that Christians will say that they made a promise to the Lord Jesus, but they didn't keep their word to the Lord because of what the promise was going to cost them.

Matthew 5: 33-37. "*Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.' But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.*"

Jesus is saying that He wants the children of the Lord to keep their word. The ultimate example of one who kept His word even though it hurt, was our Lord Jesus Christ. Every child of God is called to live by the same standard that Jesus lived by.

The kind of life God wants us to experience today is a life where Jesus Christ, our Joshua, leading us in conquest and sharing with us all the treasures of His wonderful inheritance. It is extremely important to finish a task even though you may not directly get the benefits. Sometimes you will be called to finish some tasks only for the good others and for the good of the Body of Christ. Jesus said "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me...and you will find rest from your souls.*" Are we willing to take upon ourselves the yoke of Christ? To take on the yoke of Christ means to submit to Him, to His leadership, to His Lordship, to serve Him for the good of the Body of Christ and for God's glory.

If we stay in our comfort zone eventually we will become very complacent, and complacency is a very dangerous spiritual environment that will destroy you if you wish to only stay there and never grow. It is God's responsibility to guide us. It is our responsibility to go!

Joshua 1:13-15 "*The LORD your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land... You are to help your brothers until the LORD gives them rest.*"

A lot of times we like to stay on the wilderness side of the Jordan because it suits us. We know that the land across the Jordan was a land that was flowing with milk and honey yet they were willing to settle for second best by not crossing the Jordan. Are we complacent in our spiritual journey?

The thing is, if we are not complacent, then we need to realize that in order to find and claim what the Lord wants for us, we will have to cross our Jordan River. I wonder if maybe Christians get to thinking that they have grown all they are going to grow, so they don't have a desire to go forward in their walk with the Lord. By not going forward means that they are willing to settle for less than what the Lord really has for them. That's what not crossing the Jordan means.

CONCLUSION:

I know that you are wondering, 'How can someone tell if they have become complacent satisfied with their Christian life?' Well the question that one must ask is **HAVE I LOST THE DESIRE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH JESUS?**

Here is a principle of the Christian life. We will not experience the fullness of God's blessings until we move forward in our walk with Jesus. Remaining where we are will spiritually stagnate us. By moving forward we will start experiencing God's blessings; but we also need to be prepared to experience the "conflicts of Jordan."

There are conflicts in the new land where we move to, but remember, God will turn those conflicts into your greatest blessings. **"The issue isn't whether or not we are doing a GOOD THING, the issue is whether-or-not we are doing GOD'S THING!"** Going all the way with Jesus is the only way to get His fullest blessings. The thing is, there is no such thing as middle ground. Either we will stay in the wilderness land or we move into God's Promised Land. As I have said, 'The victorious life, is a series of conflicts and victories as we defeat one enemy after another and claim more of our inheritance for the glory of God. Going all the way with Jesus will move us out of our comfort zone and cause us to grow more in our relationship with Jesus.'

To God Be the Glory, To God Be the Praise!