

Study Guide



Joshua 6:1-27 – February 19, 2017 The Battle of Jericho

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we walk through Joshua we are going to see how Joshua relates to our everyday battle of faithfulness. **Our aim and our prayer for this study is to gain the wisdom we need for the battle of faithfulness.** During our time in Joshua we will be adapting our study guide from [Crossway's book, Knowing the Bible: Joshua, A 12-Week Study](#) by Trent Hunter. We recommend you purchase this book and use it in your Community Groups and for personal study as we go through Joshua. We have copies of the book available in our bookstore.

For this weeks study on Joshua please check out the following pages...

Walk Prayer & Missions

March 25- April 4—South Sudan
For further information visit norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

February 25th— Community Group Leader/Co-Leader Meeting
March 3rd-4th— [Marriage Conference](#)
March 5th-April 9th— [Connection Group](#)
March 17th-19th— [DNow](#)
April 14th-15th— [Men's Canoe Trip](#)
May 26th-31st— [Student Life Camp](#)

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[King of My Heart](#)":

Let the King of my heart
be the mountain where I run
The Fountain I drink from
Oh He is my Song
Let the King of my heart
be the shadow where I hide
the ransom for my life
Oh He is my Song

You are good
good
ohhh
(Repeat 4x)

Let the King of my heart
be the wind inside my sails
The anchor in the waves
Oh He is my Song
Let the King of my heart
the fire inside my veins
the echo of my days
Oh He is my Song

You are good
good
ohhh
(Repeat 4x)

You're never gonna let me down
(Repeat 8x)

You are good
good
ohhh
(Repeat 4x)

You're never gonna let me down
(Repeat 8x)

When the night is holding onto me
God is holding on.
(Repeat 2x)

Joshua 6: 1-27

In chapter 6 all eyes are on the fortified city of Jericho. A city built for a fight and filled with men trained for war. But this city, as the spies found out, was melting in fear (2:11), fully aware of the Lord's power. The God of Israel was the God of heaven and earth, and he had a claim on Jericho. The manner in which the Lord took this city was carefully tuned to make a point, both to the surrounding peoples and to Israel.

To any human observer, Joshua's plan for battle was utterly ridiculous, but it was not Joshua's plan. Given to him by the Lord himself (Josh. 6:2-5), Joshua's battle plan amplified God's wisdom, not man's. The Lord could have flattened the city ahead of Israel's arrival, but he did it like this to confound human wisdom and demonstrate his strength. **The apparent folly of God's salvation strategies is even more profound at the cross.** There Jesus Christ died to flatten the fortified city of sin and death and hell. For, in the cross, "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;... so that no human being might boast in the presence of God" (1 Cor. 1:27, 31).

Now, when the walls fell down, they "fell down flat" (Josh. 6:20). When Israel took the city, they "devoted all in the city to destruction" (v. 21). And as if that were not enough, after rescuing Rahab, "they burned the city with fire, and everything in it" (v. 24), and Joshua put a curse on anyone "who rises up and builds this city" (v. 26), a judgement that would actually be fulfilled several hundred years later (1 Kings 16:34). An exception to Israel's obedience will play out in the chapter ahead, but **here we learn how God keeps his promise of blessing for obedience.** Just as God promised in Joshua 1:8, Joshua's law-keeping brought military success. In this way, Jericho serves as a paradigm for every future battle that Israel would face in the Old Testament. **Moreover, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ, a second Joshua, wins the victory by means of keeping God's law perfectly (Heb. 10:5-10) and defeating his enemies with his own counterintuitive military operation, namely, the incarnation and crucifixion (Heb. 2:14-15).**

What about the complete destruction of Jericho? In Joshua's hand there is a sword covered with the blood of women and children. However, we should be careful not to measure God's justice by our own standards (Deut. 32:4). We are finite and fallen in our understanding. Yet thoughtful readers will wonder why God would command such a slaughter. **This is difficult, but let us consider what we know from scripture first.** First, God is the creator and therefore the owner of all things. Life is his to make or take (Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6). Second, we were created to glorify God, but every human is born guilty, corrupt, and condemned under sin (Rom. 5:12-21). This is the reason that everyone eventually dies. Third, as with many aspects of Israel's life under the old covenant, there are many foreshadowings of future realities, including salvation but also judgement. Here, as in Noah's generation, God brings that future sentence into the present. Thus God's conquest of Canaan is not a model for us to imitate but a pattern of God's final judgement in hell (a place of eternal torment for those who rebel against God and refuse to repent). Fourth, the Lord was patient with the Canaanites, having allowed generations for the sin of this people, which included child sacrifice, to come to full flower (Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:24-26; 20:1-5; Deut. 9:5). **Rahab's story highlights God's purpose to save anyone who finally turned to faith.** Fifth, as a new Eden, the land was a sacred space for a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6; Rev. 21:8). This explains why God's commands for total destruction were confined to the boundaries of Canaan (Deut. 20:10-18), and why Israel would be likewise judged if she fell to the same sin (Lev. 18:26-28; Deut. 28:25-68). Removing the

unrepentant guarded Israel's purity. For all these reasons, this was not a human invasion for ethnic cleansing but a divine invasion for judgement and salvation (Deut. 32:43), a dramatic portrayal of what is required for God to be with man. **Today, Christians wield a sword heavier and more severe than anything Joshua's army carried. Jesus' cross is covered in blood as well, and it covers our sins through faith (Rom. 3:25). But apart from faith, the gospel of the cross also warns of eternal judgement for sin (Rom. 1:16-18).**

This week's "Word" was taken from Knowing the Bible: Joshua, A 12-week study; Trent Hunter: 2016

Discussion

1. Throughout the book of Joshua we hear a cadence of commands—and promises making them possible. In 6:1-5, what does God promise? What does he command?
2. Did the taking of Jericho involve a battle? In following these commands from the Lord, who got the credit for the taking of Jericho?
3. This chapter builds suspense, especially when Joshua tells the people to shout (vs. 16-20). Just before they shout, Israel receives a set of commands. What are the commands and why do you think they were given at that time just before the shouting began?
4. Joshua 6:21 is difficult for us to accept. The destruction of men, women, children, the elderly, and animals should sober us as we read. How would you try to explain why God is just in issuing these orders to the people of Israel? Several passages may be helpful in helping you to answer this question, including Genesis 15:12-16, Deuteronomy 9:4-5, Leviticus 18:20-26, and Leviticus 20:1-5, Deuteronomy 20:16-18.
5. Why is it correct to see this destruction of Jericho, not as an imperialistic human invasion, but a divine judgment on Jericho?
6. Look at verses 17-19. What are the "things devoted to destruction"? Who devoted them to destruction?

7. What is the meaning of the warning in verse 18 concerning the things devoted to destruction?

8. Hebrews 11:30-31 says that the walls of Jericho fell down by faith and that Rahab was spared from perishing by faith. In what ways did the people of Israel exercise faith in the fall of Jericho and in what ways did Rahab exercise faith in order to be saved from destruction? What did they believe and what were their acts of faith?

Application

1. To any human observer Joshua's plan for battle was utterly ridiculous—but it was not Joshua's plan. It was God's plan, and God's plan displayed God's wisdom and power, not man's wisdom and power. Think about God's plan to save people unto himself through Jesus. Does it not look utterly ridiculous to the majority of people? Please read 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 and answer these questions. How does God save? Whom does God save? Why does God save in this way?

2. Has God asked you to do something in his word that makes no sense to you and you are tempted to go your own way? Will you obey and see God demonstrate his wisdom and power? Please try to share your situation with your community group so they can encourage and pray for you.

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Joshua to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

Here is a list of local ministries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Hub/purchased
Young life
Heart of hope
First priority
Ark-la-Tex crisis pregnancy center
Community renewal
Grief counseling
Celebrate recovery
Samaritan counseling
Last call ministries
Golden age ministries
Rescue mission
Luke's lighthouse
NOLA Baptist
FCA

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you are in your groups this week! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!