

**Joshua &
The God of Conquest & Change**

Sunday, September 6, 2009

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LIFE GROUP LESSON

Living Word Church

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Conquest means anything acquired by conquering, such as a nation, a territory or spoils.

- 1 The key to our success is submission to God.
- 2 We must not allow fear to affect our faith in God's ability to deliver us.
- 3 Just as God was with Joshua, He is with us everyday as we face tough situations, difficult people, and temptations.
- 4 There are times when God provides no solution to our problem until we trust Him and step out in faith and obedience.
- 5 Telling your children what God has done for you will keep memories of God's faithfulness alive in your family.
- 6 God will reveal His power in our lives if we will follow His instructions. Obedience releases miracles.
- 7 There are times when we may feel like a failure, but we can rise above our situation through our trust in God.

LIFE GROUPS—HOMEWORK & DISCUSSION

MY LIFE — Getting to know one another.

LIFE IN THE WORD — Exploring God's Word together.

LIFE AT HOME — Applying God's Word to our daily lives.

MY LIFE

1. Imagine trying to fill the sandals of a legend like Moses. Joshua faithfully served Moses and observed how he led God's people with God's blessings. Now it was Joshua's turn to lead and he needed to know if the people would follow him as they had followed Moses. Joshua also needed to know if God would be with him as he had been with Moses.

Sometimes God asks us to do things that seem beyond our abilities. He might ask us to become a leader, begin a Life Group with our friends, take a more active role in church, or go on a mission trip. At such times it is easy to feel under qualified and overwhelmed. How do you react when faced with something you feel totally unqualified to do?

2. Money for sex. Movies and television can make it appear glamorous and adventurous, but the reality is more like disease and death. Rahab was living the life of a prostitute until one day she responded to God in faith and her life was forever changed. How can faith help someone like Rahab overcome the sins of their past? How has faith changed your life and the lives of your family?

LIFE IN THE WORD

1. Because of Rahab's faith her life was spared when her world collapsed at Jericho. By grace, through faith, God extended the promises he had made to Israel to Rahab and her family. History knows her as "Rahab the prostitute" but she also became the ancestor of a king, King David, and a Savior, Jesus Christ, (Matthew 1:5-6, 19). Read Joshua 2:8-11. According to this passage, what did Rahab know and believe about God?
2. Read James 2:18-25 and Hebrews 11:30-31. Why is Rahab mentioned in these passages? Rahab is mentioned in the Old Testament and the New Testament. She is found in the books of Joshua, Matthew, Hebrews and James. What does this say to you about the kind of person that God will use and honor?
3. A missionary named Jim Elliot once made the statement, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." How does this statement apply to Rahab and to us?
4. Read Joshua 5:13-15. When Joshua asked the commander of the Lord's army, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" he replied, "Neither." What is the difference between the Lord joining our side and our joining the Lord's side?
5. Read Joshua 6:1-5. What plan did God give Joshua to overthrow Jericho? How do you think the Israelites felt during this seven-day event (Joshua 6:6-16)? What impact do you think it had on the people of Jericho? What was God teaching the Israelites during the seven days of marching? How about the people of Jericho?

LIFE AT HOME

Jericho was more like a fortress than a city—built on a hilltop in an oblong shape about 1200' by 400'. Jericho was well-defended with substantial double walls that could easily be defended against invaders.

Jericho was shut up tight but the people had plenty of water flowing from a spring within the walls of the city. The Israelites arrived just after harvest when the people of Jericho had plenty of food too. Archaeological digs have discovered many large jars full of grain.

Jericho represents the strongholds in our lives. Old ways of thinking, bad habits, philosophies, traditions, and false assumptions we make about life are like well defended fortresses in our minds. Like a fortified city they stand in the path of our Christian growth. Jericho is the impossible situation that stands between us and the fulfillment of a God-given promise.

So what is the best way to conquer a well defended and heavily fortified stronghold?

Surely the people of Israel had better ideas and plans of invading than just marching around the city for a week.

What about building battering rams and attacking the city gates? Or scaling the walls? Or shooting arrows over the walls?

But that is the hardest part of conquering the strongholds in our life. We insist on taking matters into our own hands and doing something about it—now! We want answers. We want God to solve our problem immediately. We want deliverance from the habit the moment we pray, instant healing for our body, and instant relief from anything that troubles us.

But God often has a process that he requires us to “march” through for his own purposes. We may not understand the why, the when, or even the way. But it must be God’s way and we must wait patiently. To everyone, but God, our “march” may appear to be foolishness and nonsense. But God has a plan and a process that usually involves a promise, obedience, and victory.