



Biblical Manhood

Remembering Our Legacy, Fulfilling Our Destiny

January/February, 2017

Walking By Faith

Have you ever waited a long time for something to happen? Then the day finally arrived. Maybe it was a special birthday. Perhaps it was a vacation. It may have been your wedding or the birth of your child. You waited. You longed for the day. Then it arrived.

This is the situation the people of Israel find themselves in **Joshua 3**. They were finally moving out of the desert to cross the Jordan River into Canaan. They had been waiting for this moment for a long, long time. Joshua and Caleb had waited even longer. The day has arrived. They are about to cross Jordan into Canaan.

How does this text speak and apply to us today? This text teaches us about walking in faith. It gives us some principles to help us as we walk and wait on God.

Walking by faith means keeping your eyes focused on the Lord.

The people of Israel had been camped opposite the Jordan for three days. Then they received their first instruction, "So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; and they commanded the people, saying, 'When you see the ark of the

covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your

place and go after it'" (**Joshua 3:2-3**). They were to fix their focus on the Ark of the Covenant. As they came to the Jordan River, they were to keep their eyes on this ark.

Why were they to do this? It's because the ark was a symbol of the presence of God in their midst. God was going to go before them! It was Israel's responsibility to follow the Lord. That's walking by faith – it is staying focused on the Lord and following His lead. The only way to advance anywhere at anytime is following God's lead. He and He alone can give victory.

Alexander Maclaren once wrote, "God opens His hand one finger at a time." That's what's happening here. It is enough to trust God for the next step and to trust God for what we cannot see yet.

This is the heart of walking by faith. It is keeping your eyes focused on the Lord. It trusts Him for the next step even when you can't see it. The people of Israel had never been this way before (**3:4**). They had reached the Jordan River. It was ten to twelve feet deep. Yet, in the midst of all this, they were

to keep their eyes on the ark – on the God who was in their midst.

We must shift our attention away from the burdens, the problems, the needs, and the adversities. We must keep looking at our God. Don't spend so much time describing these things to God as you do adoring and worshiping Him. With the eyes of faith, we are to concentrate on Him and His ability to do above and beyond what we can ask or imagine.

Walking by faith expects God to do amazing things.

Before they cross the Jordan, listen to Joshua's exhortation, "And Joshua said to the people, 'Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you'" (**Joshua 3:5**). Joshua declares that God is going to do wonders among them. God is about to do amazing things for the people of Israel.

Walking by faith means expectation – expecting God to work in powerful ways. It believes that God is going to be God. It trusts that God will work in ways that can only be explained as the work of His hand. Walking by faith is not doubting that God will work but expecting Him to work.

I remember praying with a young man. We prayed fervently about a need in his life. When we got through praying, he looked up at me and said, "Do you think the Lord will do anything?" I groaned and said, "Probably not."

This is the opposite of walking by faith. We do not manipulate God or believe that He is going to work in the particular way that we want. Yet, it means believing that God will act. He will be God. He will

glorify Himself. He will do what is for our best.

It's crucial to see what Joshua told them, "Sanctify yourself." They were to get ready for God to work. The same is true for us. How do we get ready for God to work and move? We must use the means of grace. We are to fill our lives with His Word. We are to pray to Him daily. We are to engage in worship and fellowship with God's people. These are the means that God prepares us as we walk and wait on Him.

Walking by faith means that our faith will be challenged.

In **Joshua 3:6**, the priests are commanded to carry the ark and to step into the Jordan River. In **3:15**, we are given this little fact, "for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest." When they reached the Jordan, the river was at flood stage. It was not a brook or a stream; it was a raging river. It was most likely 12 feet deep. Forging or swimming was impossible.

God commands the priests and people to head out and cross the Jordan! The water was raging and God tells them to move into the Jordan. Talk about a test of faith. They will literally have to follow Him.

This reveals to us that God will challenge our faith. God got the people of Israel to the Jordan River at flood stage. This wasn't by coincidence. He orchestrated this to challenge and confirm their faith.

Your heavenly Father will do the same in your life. He will test your faith. He will stretch your trust in Him. When our faith is tested, it's not because God doesn't love us.

It is because He does love us. He has a purpose in those tests of our faith in Him.

These tests of our faith are opportunities to grow in faith. With each step of obedience, their faith grew. When they saw God miraculously stop the water, their faith grew. God worked powerfully, "And as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), that the waters which came down from upstream stood *still*, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that *is* beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho" (Joshua 3:15-16).

They needed this test of faith. You may be saying, "A test of faith needed. No, no, no. Don't need any tests." However, it was needed. They were about to enter Canaan and face the people of the land. They needed this reminder of God's faithfulness and supernatural power.

This is why we need our faith tested. It reminds us again who God is – His sovereignty, His power, and His faithfulness. It teaches us that God can and will sustain us. No one likes to be tested. However, He ordains these tests for our good and our growth.

Walking by faith believes God will fulfill His Word.

For Israel, this was the first step into the land. It was the beginning of a long journey to possess what God had promised. There would be many more challenges and

obstacles to their progress and God's purpose.

Yet, they had confidence that God will fulfill His Word, "And Joshua said, 'By this you shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan'" (Joshua 3:10-11). The Lord of all the earth was with them. He would fulfill His promises. This miracle was the proof that He would be faithful to His Word.

Walking by faith means that you have confidence that God will fulfill His Word. He will accomplish His purposes. You can trust that God will do all that He has promised. The Lord of the earth is accomplishing His purpose for His people.

You may be saying, "But we didn't cross the Jordan. We didn't see this. How can we have confidence?" You can because of the Cross and the empty tomb. Those miracles are proof positive that God will keep His promises. They should stir us to trust and rest in the fact that God will fulfill His purposes for this world, His church, and for the believer.

World Prayer Plan

March

- 1-Colombia-The Lost
- 2-Comoros Islands
- 3-Congo
- 4-Cook Islands
- 5-Costa Rica
- 6-Cote d'Ivoire
- 7-Cuba-The Church

8-Cuba-The Lost
 9-Cuba-Collapse of Communism
 10-Cyprus
 11-Czech Republic
 12-Slovakia
 13-Denmark
 14-Djibouti
 15-Dominica
 16-Dominican Republic
 17-Ecuador
 18-Egypt-The Church
 19-Egypt-The Lost
 20-Egypt-Persecuted Believers
 21-El Salvador
 22-Equatorial Guinea
 23-Eritrea
 24-Estonia
 25-Ethiopia-The Church
 26-Ethiopia-The Lost
 27-Ethiopia-Persecuted Believers
 28-Faeroe Islands
 29-Falkland Islands
 30-Croatia-The Church
 31-Croatia-The Lost

19-Grenada
 20-Guadeloupe
 21-Guam
 22-Guatemala
 23-Guinea
 24-Guinea-Bissau
 25-Guyana
 26-Haiti
 27-Holy See (Vatican)
 28-Honduras
 29-Hong Kong
 30-Hungary-The Church

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April

1-Fiji
 2-France-The Church
 3-France-The Lost
 4-France-Hardness To The Gospel
 5-France-Missionaries
 6-French Guiana
 7-French Polynesia
 8-Gabon
 9-Gambia
 10-Gaza Strip
 11-Georgia
 12-Germany-The Church
 13-Germany-The Lost
 14-Germany-Spiritual Warfare
 15-Ghana
 16-Gibraltar
 17-Greece
 18-Greenland

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