

Breakout, Part 5

The Invitation of Jesus (Joshua Outside Jericho, Joshua 5:13-15)

As Joshua walked at night through the camp of Israel outside Jericho, he met a Man holding a sword and challenged Him. The Man (Jesus) identified Himself as the commander of the Lord's army and instructed Joshua to take off his shoes because the place he was standing (where God was) was holy ground. Much can be gleaned about Jesus's invitation to us today from examining His interaction with Joshua outside of Jericho.

1. Jesus invites us to surrender:

-When Joshua asked whose side the Man was on, He said *neither* side. Instead He demanded complete and total surrender from Joshua.

-Too often, we want to know what it will take and what we will have to do to get Jesus "on our side." However, you can't bargain your way to salvation or to God's favor. Only absolute and complete surrender is adequate. We must live our lives devoted to being on *His* side.

-Jesus, the creator and ruler of the universe, has offered to trade his righteousness for your absolute surrender. He will take nothing less.

Questions to Consider: Do you subconsciously still think of having Jesus "on your side"? Do you subconsciously try to fit Him into your life to curry His favor? Or are you absolutely surrendered to Him in every area of your life? What does this look like in the area of how you use your free time? Your money? Your skills/giftings?

2. Jesus invites us to follow Him:

-God didn't show up to give Joshua the secret of how to be successful in his fight against Jericho. Instead, His instruction to Joshua was to not fight at all. God was going to do all the fighting and would get all the glory.

-God didn't need Joshua to do any of the fighting, but He did allow Joshua to be a part of God's victory.

-We likewise have been commanded to go and make disciples of all nations. But we must recognize that we cannot do this in our own strength. HE will build His church through us, *allowing* us to be a part of His work.

Questions to Consider: Consider a recent struggle you have faced in your life. How have you dealt with it? Have you tried to resolve it in your own strength/wisdom/efforts? What would it look like, instead, to allow God to work in that situation *through you* instead of you trying to do the work?

3. Jesus invites us to worship

-Just as Joshua fell at the Angel's feet and worshiped, we worship Jesus when we see Him in our daily lives.

-We can worship other things besides God, however. People worship whatever they feel they must have to bring life and security. Many pursue money as their source of security; however, Jesus says that we cannot worship both God and money (Matthew 6:21).

-As Christians, Jesus, more than money or status or accomplishments, is to be our first joy and source of meaning and security. Generosity is not about our giving, but about our placing Jesus on the throne of our hearts.

Questions to consider: Where in my daily life has Jesus revealed to me that He is present and mighty? How did I respond? What besides Jesus is my heart tempted to worship? What does my attitude towards using my money, time, and talents for God's kingdom show about what I worship?

4. Jesus invites us to victory

-Jesus shows Himself to Joshua with His sword drawn and raised to fight for His people. Jesus fights for them as commander of God's army, and gives Joshua directions for his small part in the battle.

-Similarly in the New Testament, before Jesus ascends to heaven, He assures the disciples of His ultimate victory: "All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18) and leaves them with directions for their part in expanding God's kingdom: to wait for the Holy Spirit.

-This world is passing away. We should invest for eternity in what really matters and will last forever. Hoarding your time, money, and gifts/talents for yourself is like people in the South after the Civil War keeping their Confederate money!

Questions to consider: Knowing that Jesus's victory is assured, that He will return soon in power, am I all in? Am I truly living for Him, having surrendered to Him as my Lord? Have I obeyed the directions He has given me? What

parts of my life have I not fully surrendered? In what areas do I find it hard to obey Him? What could I do this week to place Jesus first in my life?