

Dangerous Church / Faith in Action Part 2:

Moving Forward / (Visiting the past is not dwelling in the past)

Dangerous Church / Faith in Action Part 2:	0
Moving Forward / (Visiting the past is not dwelling in the past)	1
Joshua 5.....	0
To be circumcised (Something New).....	1
To be restored	2
To Loose a Blessing	2
To be tested.....	3

Joshua 5

Repeating theme of "Something new" requiring Sanctification/Consecration, Humility, and Remembrance, so that we might be Tested.

¹ When all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and the Canaanite kings along the seacoast heard how God had stopped the Jordan River before the People of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts sank; the courage drained out of them just thinking about the People of Israel.

Martin Luther King's quote about men who get scared eventually becoming dangerous.

"Men often hate each other because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they can not communicate; they can not communicate because they are separated."

To be circumcised (Something New)

²⁻³ At that time God said to Joshua, "Make stone knives and circumcise the People of Israel a second time." So Joshua made stone knives and circumcised the People of Israel at Foreskins Hill.

⁴⁻⁷ This is why Joshua conducted the circumcision. All the males who had left Egypt, the soldiers, had died in the wilderness on the journey out of Egypt. All the people who had come out of Egypt, of course, had been circumcised, but all those born in the wilderness along the way since leaving Egypt had not been. The fact is that the People of Israel had walked through that wilderness for forty years until the entire nation died out, all the men of military age who had come out of Egypt but had disobeyed the call of God. God vowed that these would never lay eyes on the land God had solemnly promised their ancestors to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. But their children had replaced them. These are the ones Joshua circumcised. They had never been circumcised; no one had circumcised them along the way.

- Perhaps the greatest level of consecration for all Israelite men was that of circumcision. To be circumcised is new, requires much humility, and offers a permanent memory of what was done.
- The other problem: the previous generation thought they had arrived. The previous generation thought that because God had delivered them the life would be easy. When we begin thinking that we have arrived, that we've got it made, that we are deserving the benefits and blessings of God, and that our minds, thoughts, and convictions are greater than God's we are setting ourselves up to be just like the previous generation. It's just the situation and circumstances that change.

⁸ When they had completed the circumcising of the whole nation, they stayed where they were in camp until they were healed.

Time has to be taken to be healed.

To be restored

⁹ God said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt." That's why the place is called The Gilgal. It's still called that.

- **Lookup reproach in Bible**
- **Noun: the expression of disapproval or disappointment : he gave her a look of reproach | a farrago of warnings and pained reproaches.**
- Jesus was reproached at the cross
 - and in our lives oftentimes through the actions we live
- To have that restoration does not mean arrival
 - There is still work to be done
 - We lift up Job, because of his restoration, but we should do introspection
 - Job didn't stop working
 - Job didn't stop caring for people
 - Job didn't stop praying & sacrificing for his children
 - Job didn't stop remembering everything that he had went through
 - Job never knew why he was challenged (at least it's not recorded)

To Loose a Blessing

Loosing a blessing is not always a blessing lost

¹⁰ The People of Israel continued to camp at The Gilgal. They celebrated the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the plains of Jericho.

11-12 Right away, the day after the Passover, they started eating the produce of that country, unraised bread and roasted grain. And then no more manna; the manna stopped. As soon as they started eating food grown in the land, there was no more manna for the People of Israel. That year they ate from the crops of Canaan.

- We will miss this if we don't look closely
- The gift/blessing of mana is taken away

Ex 16:³¹ The people of Israel called the bread manna. [d] It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. ³² Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.' "

³³ So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omer of manna in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for the generations to come."

³⁴ As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna in front of the Testimony, that it might be kept. ³⁵ The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan.

- **But it is not a blessing lost**
- It's a mark of being able to move forward
- It's another memory ...
 - Are they going to say, "Oh God, why have You taken away our manna. You are no longer providing for us."
 - Or are they going to remember the reason why God gave the nation manna in the first place: because they were groveling, and spiritually infants, and spiritually weak.

To be tested

13 And then this, while Joshua was there near Jericho: He looked up and saw right in front of him a man standing, holding his drawn sword. Joshua stepped up to him and said, "Whose side are you on—ours or our enemies'?"

- When we get circumcised in our lives
- When we go through a sanctification
- When we've been restored to places of greatness that we've never imagined
 - We get a bit proud
 - We get a bit stronger
 - We get a bit more confident

- We walk with more of a strut
- *We risk being prideful*
- *We risk being rude*
- *We risk being insensitive*
- *We risk misjudging*
- And that's what happening
 - Joshua walks up to the man
 - Gets in his face
 - Joshua orders: **DECLARE**
 - **"Are you with us or with them"**

We always compare our Christian life to a battle. "I'm on the battlefield for my Lord ..." But one of the greatest problems with thinking in terms of battle and war is the same thing that exists in world battle and wars. One of the greatest threats to military success is fratricide: accidental killing of one's forces.

- It can be from two units not communicating correctly about the direction of fire.
- It can result from someone accidentally calling in artillery (cannon) fire on the wrong position
- It can be from an incorrect reading of coordinates for an air strike of helicopter support
- It's always a responsibility of the commander or leader to address.

But the word fratricide comes from the same root as fraternity. It literally means the killing of one's brother or sister. And it doesn't matter whether it's an accident. And in the Christian context it is the saddest.

- Because we Christians are the greatest threat to our existence.
- I firmly believe one the greatest tricks the enemy tries to use against us is ourselves.
- **The most frequent response I hear from people that have qualms with Christianity are the behaviors of other Christians. And that breaks my heart.**
- **We commit fratricide everyday and most often don't care.**
- And we do it with smiles on our faces.
- And we do it when we are hurting.
- And we do it when we are struggling.
- **But we do it mostly, once we, like Joshua, have "arrived"**
 - Once we've been blessed
 - Once we've been consecrated
 - Once we've been saved & sanctified
 - Once we've overcome
 - Once we've gotten stronger
 - Once we've gotten confident
 - And we kill our brothers & sisters with our words
 - And we kill our brothers & sisters with actions
 - And we kill our brothers & sisters with our expectations
 - And we kill our brothers & sisters with our limited "knowledge"
 - And we kill our brothers & sisters with our limited "wisdom"
 - And we kill our brothers & sisters with the fallacy of how we come to believe God works in our lives.

- **"If God did it for me He will do it for you"**, Is that 100% true? Maybe it should be, "God did it for me, and I pray that He will do it for you, too."
- **"I know how God works"** Do we really? Just from one single event in our lives. Maybe it should be, "I know how God can work if He chooses."
- **One of the most difficult jobs I have to deal with is being "clean up man"**
 - I've had to clean up prayer, after someone passed away because of a prayer or declaration made by a "well meaning" Christian
 - I've had to clean up a broken wife because of a prayer or declaration made by a "well meaning" Christian.
 - I've had to clean up an under-empowered husband because of a prayer or declaration made by a "well meaning" Christian.
 - I've had to clean up groups of people in a funeral sermon because of a prayer or declaration made by a "well meaning" Christian.
 - It's all fratricide - whether it is accidental or on purpose!
 - **From the bottom of the heart, I am looking at everyone here, including myself, and I'm asking that we do not commit fratricide against each other. Let's repeat it.**
- **One last aside to this, do not confuse Christian questioning with fratricide.**
 - Just because you are questioned by someone in love does not mean they are killing you.
 - Test your heart when someone is approaching you.
 - Test your response when some approaches you.
 - And regardless of how you are approached YOU are responsible for the reply.
- **Do like Joshua**
 - **Ask first**
 - **Test the response with your spirit and heart**
 - **Believes the response**

¹⁴ He said, "Neither. I'm commander of God's army. I've just arrived." **Joshua fell, face to the ground, and worshiped. He asked, "What orders does my Master have for his servant?"**

¹⁵ God's army commander ordered Joshua, "Take your sandals off your feet. The place you are standing is holy."

Joshua did it.