

20180218 Joshua series: part 2 A path you've never walked

Text Joshua 3:1-5 (1-17)

Joshua 3:1-5 Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. 2 After three days the officers went throughout the camp, 3 giving orders to the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. 4 Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about two thousand cubits (800 m) between you and the ark; do not go near it."

5 Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you."

Intro: In a way we are all like Joshua. We are continually entering upon new pathways. But after a while many of these new pathways turn-out to be just the same old pathways not new ones.

"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."

Often without the results that God wants in our lives.

We can learn a valuable lesson from the People of Israel.

I. The people of Israel had also been down this same pathway.

40 years before to this time they had traveled down through this very same desert land. But they had been abruptly driven back to Sinai BECAUSE they refused to be obedient to God! They were afraid and not willing to go forward against these mighty men. It seemed to them that this was something which they could not overcome.

Now after the death of Moses, Joshua was selected by God to be the new leader of Israel. Romans 7:15-20a "I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate..., it is sin living in me that does it.

18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. 19 I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. It is sin living in me that does it.

It sounds like the Apostle Paul had difficulty going down the same old pathways over and over again.

Paul says you can't change from your own strength. That kind of victory comes only from a relationship with God.

It is not willpower but God power that changes us.

II. NOW Joshua is at the edge of this same pathway.

"As I was with Moses..., so will I be with you! I'll not fail you!

I'll not let you down! I'll not desert you! I'll not forsaken you! I will show you that I am your God! Joshua 1:5

"We're going to rise tomorrow! And we are going into this land!" "When you see..., the Ark of the Covenant..., You follow after that!"

For you will see...Joshua 3:3

III. The Ark of the Covenant contained all that was Holy unto them.

The Ten Commandments. Their bible, the symbol of God's presence.

It is the word of God with them!

Joshua was telling them to follow and obey the word of God. He was saying stay on the pathway of the Word of God.

We need to be sure that we are obeying the Word of God!

God does not just give you a road map and say go. God gives you relationship.

BUT listen to what happened...NOW...The people said...,"Well, we know where we are going.

We have been across this same dessert land before. And we know where we are going."

They spoke the phrase that limits growth. "We have always done it this way."

Joshua said...,"Oh No you don't. Not this time!" "We are going to take a different path than the one we have been on before! You have not gone this way before.

We haven't gone through this way before.

Many times in life you will be just a few steps away from a breakthrough to God's best for you.

Instead of your spiritual life growing to the next level in your relationship with God

You just walk around in circles. But God has so much more in store for you.

Follow after the ark and Sanctify yourself.... Clean yourself... Make your life holy...

Because tomorrow God is going to do wonders among you.

VI. On the next day...

They got down to the Jordan River. Hinder, but remembered stories of the Red Sea. God would do it (not in exactly the same way)!

All it took was this one leader, Joshua to lead the children across.

I want to tell you here today...That God can do wonders for us.

1. First we must sanctify ourselves. Joshua 3:5

2. We must pray

3. We must step out a little farther

Thoughts to meditate on?

1. What flooded rivers do you have to overcome?

2. How are you going to choose to handle the giants around you?

3. What steps are you going to take so that fear does not stop you from stepping out?