VICTORY IN JESUS

Joshua 1:1-18

The book of Joshua opens with the people of God encamped along the banks of the Jordan River, looking into the land that God had promised to them through Abraham. It was a land said to be “flowing with milk and honey,” it was a land of abundance, and it was there's for the taking.

These messages from the book of Joshua are going to focus upon the victorious Christian life. A life that has been promised to us by God, through His Son Jesus Christ. It is a life of abundance, and it is ours for the taking.

To fully appreciate the spiritual significance of where the Israelites were going, we need to understand where they had been. Back in the book of Exodus we find the children of Israel in bondage in the land of Egypt. I believe that this represents life without Christ. The Egyptian bondage represents the hold that Satan has upon the lives of those who have not been saved. As you study the book of Exodus you will find that the theme throughout is redemption.

Exodus 3:7-10. This is a beautiful picture of God sending His Son to pay the price to redeem fallen man and to purchase us out of the slave market of sin.

Two books later, in the book of Numbers, we see the children of Israel in the wilderness. They spent over 40 years in the wilderness which was located between Egypt and Canaan. The wilderness was better than Egypt but it was not as good as Canaan. Canaan represents God's best for His children.

The wilderness wanderings of the Israelites represents the lives of a great number of born again believers. They've escaped the taskmasters and bondage of Egypt, but they've settled for something less than what God intends for them to have as His child. They've settled for a life of mediocrity.

Now then, let me be careful to say this. We must not let ourselves get sidetracked by our hymnology. Many gospel songs use the Jordan river to illustrate death, and the crossing of the Jordan into Canaan as the believer's entrance into heaven. But one of the biggest drawbacks to that interpretation of the book of Joshua is that when the children of Israel entered Canaan they were faced with many enemies and had to fight many battles in order have what was rightfully there's. And if I understand my Bible correctly, I'll not have any enemies to face or any battles to fight when I get to heaven. But if we look at Canaan as representing God's best for us this side of eternity, then we can more easily understand the presence of enemies and the need for fighting in order to have what rightfully belongs to us as a child of God. The enemies are all of the forces of hell that are launched at us by Satan himself, and the battles represent our daily struggle to overcome the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

The questions that we are faced with at the outset of these messages are simply these:
1. Are you in the wilderness of defeat, or in the land of victory? Is your life a constant struggle against the powers of darkness, with constant defeat, or is it a victorious war waged in the power of a Risen Lord?
2. This is taking into account that you have escaped the bondage of Egypt through salvation.

REMEMBER: EGYPT=LIFE WITHOUT CHRIST WILDERNESS=A LIFE OF MEDIOCRITY CANAAN=GOD'S BEST FOR HIS CHILDREN

We will divide this first chapter of Joshua into three sections: The Promise of Victory Supplied, The Principle of Victory Applied, and The Pleasure of Victory Denied.

I. THE PROMISE OF VICTORY SUPPLIED vs. 1-4

God's words to Joshua, "go over this Jordan", opens for us the possibility of life on a higher plane. It presents to us the possibility of being delivered from a wilderness experience of defeat into the experience of victory, even though it be through warfare and conflict.
A. The Period in which it is Attainable "NOW therefore"

1. Victory in our life as a child of God is not something that we have to wait for, it can be ours NOW!

2. Romans 8:37
3. Notice the wording in Joshua 1:3. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that HAVE I given unto you..." Even as the Lord was speaking to Joshua, He assured Him that victory was his NOW.
4. The only thing that keeps us from having victory NOW, is us.

B. The People to whom it is Available "THOU and ALL this people"

1. The promise of victory is for Leaders and Laymen alike.
2. Being a leader does not mean that a person has risen above the need for victory, and by the same token, being a laymen does not mean that a person has to live below victory.
C. The Place to which it is Applicable "Every place" The whole land was given to the people, but they could only possess the portion that they claimed. And they could only claim as much as they were willing to fight for. In applying this to our lives, we must understand that at the time of our conversion we became entitled to a life of victory in Jesus. The chains of Satan's bondage were broken and now victory is ours for the taking. BUT we will only experience victory in our life to the degree that we are willing to put forth the effort to fight for what is rightfully ours.

Possessing "every place" that is rightfully ours in Christ involves:

1. Omnipotence
   a. Before the children of Israel could "possess their possessions", the Jordan had to be crossed, cities had to be captured, battles had to be fought, and the Canaanites had to be conquered. But here's the key, they didn't have to accomplish these things in their own strength. God was working mightily on their behalf.
   b. Thank God that we do not have to fight the battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil in our own strength. God is more than willing to work mightily on our behalf.
      (1) Ephesians 1:15-20 - Notice again verses 19-20 - The same power that raised Christ from the dead is available to us so that we might live victoriously over sin.
      (2) Ephesians 3:20 - Mark these five words - Able, Abundantly, Above, Ask, and According
         *ABLE - Because of His omnipotence, the Lord is able to give us victory. What we are not able to do for ourselves, the Lord is able to do through His power. Let's face it, if we were able to change ourselves, we would have already done it.
         *ABUNDANTLY, ABOVE, ASK - What Paul is saying here is that God is able to do super-abundantly above and beyond what we ask or think, and then some on top of that. Think of the one spiritual victory that you would like to experience the most. God is able to help you win even the greatest of victories and then do more on top of that. We should not be guilty of limiting God just because we have failed in our own efforts to gain the victory in our life.
   *ACCORDING - How does God do all of this? He does it through the power of the Holy Spirit that is currently working in our life. And to what degree the Holy Spirit is effective in our life depends upon our willingness to yield to Him in our daily experience.
2. Obedience
   a. God was willing to show Himself strong on the behalf of the Israelites as long as they were willing to yield to His authority and conduct themselves according to His orders.
   b. God will not bless disobedience. We have no right to expect God to give us victory if we are not willing to submit to the Lordship of His Son in our lives and be obedient His Word.
3. Patience
   a. Deuteronomy 9:1-3
      (1) Early on in Israel's quest to claim the Promised Land God helped them to get rid of the Anakims.
      (2) Exodus 23:26-30
         (1) At first glance, this would prove to be a contradiction to what we just read in Deuteronomy 9. In this passage, God's promise was to destroy Israel's enemies "little by little."
         (2) But if you will look closely at the verse in Deuteronomy, God only promised to get rid of the Anakims "quickly", the rest would be defeated, "little by little."
   c. The spiritual application to us today is obvious. There will be some enemies in our life that we are able to overcome
"quickly", but the majority of our victories will come
"little by little."
(1) Conventional wisdom would tell us that the best thing to do would have been to get rid of Israel's enemies all at
once, but Divine wisdom said, "I'm going
to do it "little by little."
(2) By disposing of their enemies a little at a time, Israel was kept in a state of constant dependence upon God.
e. Nowhere in the Scriptures has God promised to give us victory over all of our enemies at once, and therefore we
should not expect it. God wants us to learn to depend upon Him for our victory.
f. Spiritual growth, unlike salvation, is not an instantaneous process, it is a gradual one. Claiming all that is ours in
Christ is a gradual process as we overcome one enemy at a time.
g. It's easy at times to become frustrated due to our inability to overcome sin in our life and to just throw up our hands
and say, "It's no use." But that's just what the devil wants us to do. He wants us to quit. He wants us to give up. He
wants us to settle for life in the wilderness.
h. There is nothing that the Devil hates more than to see a child of God glorying and rejoicing in their relationship with
Jesus Christ. Do you know why that is? Because THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH! (Nehemiah 8:10) And
because of his hatred for those things, he will do everything within his power to rob us of our victory and to keep us
wandering around in the wilderness of defeat and discouragement.

CLOSING: An entire generation died in the wilderness before they could reach the land of Canaan. Only Joshua and
Caleb were allowed to enter. It didn't have to be that way, but they chose to ignore the Word of God and refused to
claim by faith what was rightfully theirs in the
Lord.
In spite of all that the Lord has done to make it possible for us to have victory and to enjoy a life of fullness in Him, only
on occasion do we find a Joshua or a Caleb who "wholly" follow the Lord. Neither one of these men ever suggested
that taking the land would be easy
or that there would not be any sacrifice involved, but they believed God and were willing to place their faith in Him and
to put forth the effort to possess their possessions.
The land of full blessing and victory is only entered by those who are hungry and eager and willing to put forth the
effort. Victory in the Christian life is not easy, Paul made that clear in Ephesians 6:12-13, "For we wrestle not against
flesh and blood, but against
principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high
places.
Wherefore take unto you the whole amour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all,
to stand." Possessing our possessions in Christ involves conflict, it involves sacrifice, it involves death.