

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 11.19.2023

IT'S TIME TO CROSS OVER– JOSHUA 3:1-17

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Daniel states, “The story we’re going to look at today represents a significant milestone in the life of God’s people. It’s a moment that was hundreds of years in the making. After four hundred years of slavery and forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites were preparing to take their first steps in the Promised Land. God’s plan from the beginning was to bring His people into this good land that flowed with milk and honey. However, because of their disobedience, they ended up taking an extended detour in the wilderness. A trip that should have only taken eleven days ended up taking them forty years. Now, the time had finally come for them to go in and take possession of the Promised Land, but before they could do that, they first had to figure out how to get across the Jordan River.” Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from the Pastor Daniel’s sermon?
2. If we expect God to move in our lives in a mighty way, how do we prepare for the journey following God’s leading?

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOSHUA 3:1-5

For three days, the Israelites camped along the eastern banks of the Jordan. Unfortunately for them, the land God had pledged to give them was on the western side of the river. In other words, they were on the wrong side of the river. Normally this wouldn’t be too big of a problem. The Jordan River isn’t too wide and there are places where you could cross. However, God just so happened to lead the Israelites to the Jordan in the springtime when the river is at flood stage. During this season, the river would expand to over a mile wide.

1. Why do you suppose God had the Israelites camp there for three days?
2. Imagine this scene as a movie, how do you picture it? Tell the group.
3. What was the Ark? What did it represent?
4. If the Ark of the Covenant represented the very presence of God among the Israelites, and we know that today, God’s presence dwells in us through the Holy Spirit, what should our following Him look like today?
5. Have there been times in your life that God has directed you to a place that seemed impossible to cross? How did the Lord lead you safely through this new challenge, explain?

For three days, while the Israelites sat there staring at the Jordan, the impossibility of their situation was driven home. There was too much water moving. Perhaps the strongest among them could swim across, but what about the elderly,

“PROMISES” in 2023

the infirmed, and the children? It appeared as though their newly appointed leader – Joshua – had led them to a dead end, but God was about to turn this dead end into a doorway.

6. How did the LORD deliver the Israelites, bring confidence to follow Joshua and push forward to enter the promised land?
7. What does it mean to consecrate ourselves to the LORD? How can we do this practically? (Read 1 Peter 3:15, 1 Thess. 5:18-23)

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOSHUA 3:6-13

God knew that his generation needed to have their own personal power encounter with Him. They had been raised on the stories of their parents who told them about the ten plagues God brought against Pharaoh and the parting of the Red Sea, but now that entire generation had died off. These were their kids. They could no longer rely on the stories of their parents. They needed to start telling their own stories. This would allow them to do just that.

1. What do you notice about the way that Gods leads Joshua?
2. What did the Lord tell Joshua in this passage and why is it important? (vs 6-8)
3. Why is it important that the next generation experiences their own miracles and stories with God?
4. What do you think it felt like for the Israelites on this day? Explain...
5. Why do you suppose God didn't part the waters before they got there? What is the lesson for us?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOSHUA 3:14-17

1. What do you think it felt like to be Joshua on this day? What do we learn about following God from this?
2. In your opinion, what was the lesson God was teaching His people through this event?
3. Pastor Daniel talked about dynamic faith and how it led Noah to build and Ark and led Abraham to leave everything and everyone to go to the land God would show him. How would you describe dynamic faith and how can you begin to practice it in your life? (Read Hebrews 11 together and encourage one another)

“PROMISES” in 2023

Pastor Daniel tells us “The Bible talks about several different kinds of faith. One type of faith you’ll find described in the Bible is dead faith. James writes about this kind of faith when he says, ‘faith without works is dead.’ If your faith is nothing more than a dry adherence to a set of theological positions, but it hasn’t impacted the way you live in any way or produced any fruit in your life, the Bible would say your faith is dead. Biblical faith means far more than believing the right things. It is not a noun, it’s a verb. It is an action word. There is what the Bible calls demonic faith. “You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.” Then there is dynamic faith. Dynamic faith is what led Noah to build the ark. It’s what led Abraham to leave everything and everyone he knew to go to an undetermined place. It’s what led Peter and Andrew to leave their family’s fishing business to become fishers of men. And it’s what led these priests to step into the waters of the Jordan and get their feet wet.

1. How has God been faithful to you? When have you seen Him do something that defied all logic, reason, or explanation?
2. God asks all of us to follow Him in obedience. For Joshua and the Israelites, that meant crossing the Jordan. What does obedience look like for you personally at this time in your life?
3. Who do you know that needs the gospel but seems impossible to reach? How does this passage from Joshua encourage you in God’s work in seemingly impossible circumstances?

PRAYER: Pray that God would help you be obedient in moments that seem overwhelming. Ask God to help you prepare your heart now for His work in the future. Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of times in the past where God has worked in unexpected ways.

“The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground. (Josh. 3:17)