

Joshua Daily Devotionals



Week Three: The Holy Spirit Opens Our Eyes to God's Work around Us

Monday, 4/27

“¹⁶ The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city! ¹⁷ The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.”

This week we're looking at Joshua chapters 2 and 6, which together, give us a picture of the mighty city of Jericho, and its eventual supernatural destruction.

Jericho is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities on earth, and probably one of the first walled cities, ever. In terms of defense think of Minas Tirith in Lord of the Rings, our own NORAD facility in Colorado, or really just think of “Not gonna happen.” It was impenetrable.

Jericho represented the peak of conventional military defense for its era, and the Israelites military had no answer for its defense.

But those walls came a tumblin' down.

The victory over Jericho wasn't just one more city along the way, it was an instructional moment to the people of God. What is impossible for us, in our own strength and in our own limited ability, is not impossible for our supernatural God. He is able to do so much more than we can conceive or imagine, that we're only given the faintest glimpse of his power through events like the fall of Jericho.

Consider the things you might think of as impossible obstacles. What is God calling you to that seems impossible or improbable?

Ephesians 3:20

Tuesday, 4/28

The conquest of Jericho demonstrated to the Israelites in a compelling way that God was not only at work in ways they didn't understand, but more powerful than the most well-defended city they had ever encountered. God clearly wasn't working within the bounds of the natural world.

Schaefer suggests that "Our generation is overwhelmingly naturalistic." As a default, we are told that there are naturalistic explanations within a closed system, or to put it simply, only normal stuff is happening.

This worldview is drastically different than the Christian worldview, which Schaeffer suggests can be illustrated with two parts of an orange. On the one half you have the natural world, and on the other the supernatural. You just don't have a whole orange without both halves.

We can live our entire lives in such a way that we only acknowledge the natural world, but any claims we make about reality, or our lives, or our place in the world will only be half true.

This puts us in an interesting spot as Christians, because it means we'll live in a way that only half makes sense to the world around us.

In Joshua 6:3 when God said, "March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days." He didn't offer a naturalistic battle plan, and to the Jericho, the plan probably didn't make sense. To the world around us, I life lived in the reality of God's presence will be incredibly strange.

How have you been called to live in a way that acknowledges both "halves of the orange?"

2 Cor 4:17-18

Wednesday, 4/29

Recognizing that the world we inhabit is composed of both the natural and the supernatural puts us, as Christians, in strange company. We're at the weird kid table in the cafeteria of life, surrounded by all sorts of outsiders who believe strange things.

The idea that humans can connect to something supernatural, or be folded into something greater isn't unique, but the Christian distinction can be found in the present-tense, ongoing, here and now reality of Jesus Christ in me. Not a far-off expectation of oblivion or enlightenment, or an erasure of self, instead we live out the reality of the living resurrected Christ at work in us now.

Schaeffer writes, "Christian mysticism is communion with Christ. It is Christ bringing forth fruit in me, the Christian, with no loss of personality and without my being used as a stick or a stone, either."

Galatians 2:20 tells us, *"²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*

Life lived in relationship with Jesus, isn't a separation from self, it's a redemption of what we were, and a reunion into what we were made to be.

What are some of the ways that you've seen (or are currently seeing) Christ at work in your life?

Colossians 1:27

Thursday, 4/30

In 2 Kings 6:15-17, Elisha and a young man who is with him find themselves surrounded by an army of raiders sent to capture them. Strategically, they're in a bad spot. They don't seem to have any chance for survival, much less victory, and the youngster voices some understandable concern.

Elisha, on the other hand, understands a different reality, and he prays for his young friend to see the world as it really is. And by the grace of God, the young man learns that they're actually very safe.

Schaffer writes of this passage, "...the significant thing is that the prayer was not that something would come. It was already there. The only difference was the young man's eyes had to be opened to see what Elisha already saw. The supernatural was not far off, it was there."

It's difficult for us to see the world as it truly is apart from the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Even as we stand in the midst of the armies of heaven, we may feel unsafe. Even as we sit at the table of the King of all creation, we may worry about how we'll eat. Or as we sit in comfort, we may forget that God's blessings are not the result of our own deservedness.

Seeing the world as it truly exists, both the natural and the supernatural, is only possible through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

How has God helped you see the world more accurately? How do you see people, or places, or things differently because of the Holy Spirit in you?

Colossians 3:2

Friday, 5/1

There are plenty of ways that we can get some sort of wisdom in this life, some less painful than others. Learning from folks who have been there, studying the right sort of resources, or even charging in head-first and picking yourself up afterwards. But there is a type of wisdom that none of us have access to on our own.

1 Corinthians 2:10-13 says,

¹⁰ These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

The Holy Spirit reveals wisdom that isn't conceived of by human minds, brings understanding that is beyond human comprehension, and imparts truth that we could never reveal on our own.

What is one significant thing that you have grown to understand through your relationship with God?

Proverbs 2:6

Saturday, 5/2

⁸ Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof⁹ and said to the men, "I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. ¹⁰ For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. ¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.

Rahab's conversation with the Israelites demonstrates a reality we often forget; God is at work before we get there. Before the spies arrived in the city, before anyone could pass her a brochure, or present her with an argument, God was at work in the life of Rahab.

God had demonstrated in a compelling way, to a young Canaanite prostitute, that, "...he is God in the heavens and above and on the earth beneath."

The privilege that we have, as God's kids, is to participate and experience the work that God has already begun in the world around us. Rahab's understanding that something supernatural was at work in the world around her motivated her to take action in the physical world.

There is no place where God is not present, living, active, and we are invited to live out our lives in light of that reality. The reality of the supernatural should be as influential to us, as it was to Rahab.

Where are some places where it's hard to remember that God is already at work?

Psalm 139:7-10