

Friday, May 6, 2016

Wholeheartedly

Joshua 14-15

So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.'
Joshua 14:9

Caleb has been waiting a long time—45 years! It was that long since the time his feet first touched the land that he was being given now. He was ready to take the land. He knew there were still battles to be fought but, at 85 years old, he was ready to fight for the land he was promised (Deuteronomy 1:36). I am sure that Joshua loved giving him the land. Remember that Joshua and Caleb were the two spies who were certain the people of the land could be defeated (Numbers 14:6). How many conversations had they had since that day, looking forward to when the land would be theirs? Caleb had trusted and followed the LORD with his whole heart. He believed God even when others feared. When others saw the obstacle, he saw the Lord. The implication is that Caleb continued to follow God wholeheartedly his whole life, trusting that God would keep His word. I long to serve the Lord and follow Him with all my heart—every moment of the day and night. He has promised so many great things to me. He has promised me an inheritance, held for me in heaven. What a Savior! What a God! How can I give my heart to anything but Him?

Dear Father, I love You with all my heart. I know that many times my actions don't reveal the depth of my love for You. Take my heart and make it Your very own! Amen.

Saturday, May 7, 2016

Worship

Joshua 16-17

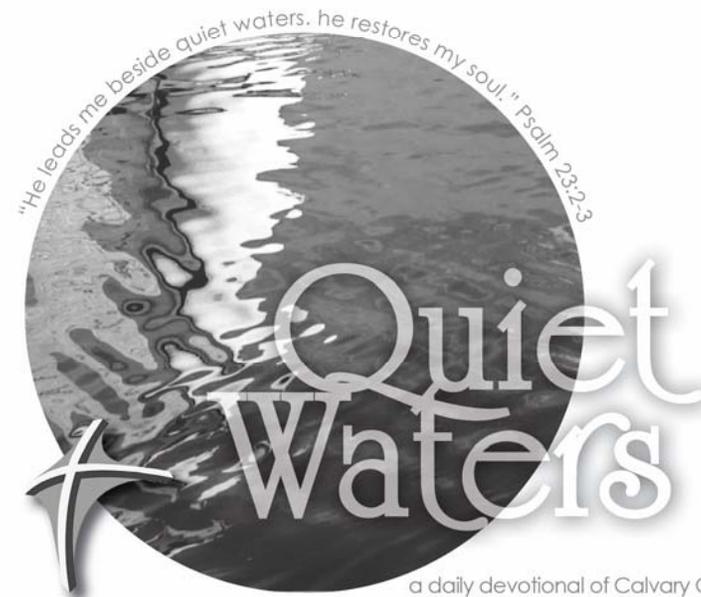
The people of Joseph replied, "The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots, both those in Beth Shan and its settlements and those in the Valley of Jezreel."
Joshua 17:16

As the land is divided, one tribe feels slighted. They are not happy with the provision of God. Joseph is only giving that which the LORD has decreed. The people of Joseph tell Joshua that the provision of God is not enough. This is not worship. Worship recognizes that God is sovereign and majestic. He allows or decrees all that is and all that will be. He is in complete control. Worship is coming to declare this truth. It is not coming to accuse God of not giving enough. The others have come humbly reminding Joshua of the promises made to them. These people just want more. They want more than enough. Who knows better what I need—me or God? I need to come to a place in my life where I am not looking for more than what God has determined is enough for me! There are so many ways that I do this, and it always keeps me from worshiping God in gratitude for the abundance that He has bestowed on me.

O Lord, keep me from prideful discontent with Your amazing provision. Forgive me for the times that I have not worshiped You because I have allowed myself to be dissatisfied. I worship You and Your gracious generosity to me. I long to give back to You. Amen


Pastor Chuck Cervenka

May 2-May 7, 2016



a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, May 2, 2016

They

Joshua 6-7

“Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. Joshua 7:11

After a dramatic victory over Jericho, which was a very great city, the Israelites find themselves routed by Ai, which was a lesser opponent. Joshua seeks the LORD as to why. What happened that the LORD was no longer with them? God tells Joshua that He will not be with Israel because they have sinned (7:12). They have brought into their camp some of the devoted things of Jericho. With the sin in their camp, they will not be able to stand against their enemies. They must purge the sin by ridding the camp of that which has been plundered. They go through the process that allows God to reveal the man who had done this thing. It was Achan. When it was uncovered what he had done, he, his family, and all he had was destroyed. I wonder what Achan felt, as the process went on and it came closer to the time his sin would be uncovered? He thought it was a private sin, but it was not. No sin is. I must learn and grasp this. One of the reasons that the people of God today are ineffective against the enemy is because we tolerate sin in our camp. I must remember that my sin impacts the whole. Even the sin that I think I have hidden is laid bare before God and it hurts not only me, but my family, my church, and the Church at large.

Dear LORD, forgive me, please, for my secret sins. Help me keep my tent pure. Amen

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

Inquire

Joshua 8-9

The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD.

Joshua 9:14

While reading the accounts of the complete cleansing of Jericho and Ai, I am struck with the totality of the conquest. Every man, woman, and child was to be put to death. I must remember that it is not because they were Israel's enemies; it was because they had sinned against God. Their sin was egregious and in total disregard to God. Just as Achan—with his family—had to be punished for his sin, so did the people of Canaan. Their sin had earned the wrath of God—as all sin does. Judgement came for their sin, as it must for all sin. God had revealed Himself and given opportunity for repentance. He had saved Rahab when she turned to Him. The people of Gibeon were clearly told of God and His plan (9:24) and they devised a scheme to deceive Israel. The plan worked and their lives were spared. It is interesting to me that instead of inquiring of the LORD, the leaders of Israel chose to eat stale and moldy food. It is so easy to be the reader and think of what should have occurred. Clearly, I can see the deceit and the absolute and simple solution of turning to inquire of the LORD. What in the world was Joshua thinking? Really, Joshua? Are you not getting this? But then I must pause and consider the times that I have chosen moldy food over time inquiring of the LORD, instead making decisions based on my best understanding of circumstances. How many times has that left me with consequences that are less than desirable?

Dear Lord, remind me, please, to inquire of You in all of my situations. Keep me so close to You that the first thought I have is to ask You which way I should go. Amen.

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

Because

Joshua 10-11

All these kings and their lands Joshua conquered in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. Joshua 10:42

God has fought for Israel. He has gone ahead of them and has secured victory over these different nations and kings in one campaign. Joshua has been victorious because the LORD fought for him. Each step of the way, Joshua does exactly as the LORD has commanded—the author of this book is careful to record that fact. Joshua has been, and will remain, victorious as he continues to battle the enemies of the LORD in the strength and will of the LORD. He is intentional in his mission. He is setting out to accomplish all that God commanded through Moses (11:15). As much as possible, I believe that Joshua was focused on obedience and the cleansing of the land for the LORD and for His people. He knew he would be victorious because of the promise of the LORD. I can be sure of this as well. I must learn what it means to decisively and completely obey the Lord when He commands me to put off every sin in my life. I must go to battle confidently against the sins that have such a hold on my life. I can conquer these things because the LORD will fight for me, just as He fought for Israel. I can be confident that the sins within me that war against my soul can be defeated by God.

Dear God, help me to step out in obedience and confidence that I can fight victoriously against the very things that wage war inside me. Help me realize that I must completely rid myself of these things—that only happens with Your help! Amen.

Thursday, May 5, 2016

Be sure

Joshua 12-13

When Joshua was old and well advanced in years, the LORD said to him, “You are very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over... I myself will drive them out before the Israelites. Be sure to allocate this land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have instructed you...” Joshua 13:1 & 6b

Joshua has reached the end of his fighting for the LORD. It is not that the conquest is complete, it is that Joshua's involvement is over. He has brought them to a time of rest from war (11:23). Now it is time for him to complete the task assigned to him—dividing the land among the tribes in the exact way that God had instructed. God tells Joshua that He himself will drive the peoples out before the Israelites. As usual, Joshua obeys and begins the process of dividing the land. The account begins with a reminder of the land already allotted to the tribes that settled on the east side of the Jordan. These lands were assigned through Moses. God is fulfilling the promise of land. I try to imagine what could be going through the mind of the weary warrior. Was there discouragement that his age stopped the process or was there great celebration that at long last, the promise on the lips of the people as they left Egypt was being fulfilled? How full was his heart, as he prepared to utter the words that so many people had longed to hear? Did he revel in remembering once more that God is faithful?

Dear LORD, You are true to Your promises. You are faithful. Remind me often of all that You have done through me and for me. Remind me, as I age and as my body grows more weary, that You still have assignments for me to fulfill for You! I'm Yours! Amen