Joshua 6
The Battle Belongs to the Lord
Message 5

8/27/18

Chapter 6 of Joshua recounts one of the more famous stories in Joshua's life. It is the "battle" of Jericho. In reality there wasn't much of a battle. God went before. (Joshua 5:13-15) The real question for Joshua was simply whether or not he would follow the leading of the Lord. I think that often the issue is that we neither perceive nor believe what God says, resulting in fear in our lives.

After Joshua settled the issue that responsibility was to follow the Lord, (perceive what God was doing), then he had to choose to believe and obey what God told him to do. As we consider the instructions for defeating Jericho there isn't much that makes sense about the instructions. In addition, there seems to be several things that shouldn't "matter" all that much. Yet, the instructions to Joshua were very specific. Joshua had to decide if he would absolutely follow what God told him to do. After that decision was made, the rest was just details.

I was wondering what was going through Joshua's mind as he was preparing to march on Jericho. We don't know because the Bible doesn't tell us, but I wonder if he at some point thought, "What if this doesn't work?" "What will the people of Israel think if this fails?" "What will the Canaanites think if nothing happens?" "What is plan B?" There was no plan B because plan A couldn't fail since it was God's plan. That did not preclude the possibility of fear on Joshua's part or on the people's part. However, their faith in who God was, what He was doing, and what He had promised allowed them to move ahead unlike their parents.

The other thing that struck me in this chapter was the absolute destruction of things and people who were in the city. There are these opposing pictures of people and things devoted to the Lord for preservation, and things and people devoted to the Lord for destruction. God both judges and saves to His glory. He is the central figure of the universe. Our lives must be oriented around Him, not the other way around. One of the great lessons of Jericho is the same lesson that Jesus taught His disciples. "He who is not for me, is against me." (Matthew 12:30) We tend to think that there is much more neutral ground than there is when it comes to following the Lord. We are going to see in the next chapter that there are no "small compromises" when it comes to obedience.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Why did God ask the people only to march around the city and not attack it?

2. How detailed were God's instructions to Joshua? Why?

3. What does this chapter say about God providing leadership for His people and His people following the leadership?

4. Are there any “walls” in your life that seem insurmountable? What is God saying to you about those walls and how He wants you to face them or deal with them?

5. What do you know about God and His previous dealings in your life that would impact your approach to those walls?