

Faith Marching and Walls Falling: Joshua

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 September 2014

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Book of Joshua, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.! Then you'll find the book of Joshua. In chapter 5, I think the setting is well known to us.

The Israelites have entered into the promised land, and they're knocking on the door, so to speak, of the city of Jericho. So here we are at chapter 5 and verse 13.

We'll be reading through chapter 6 and verse 25. Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand.

Joshua went up to him and asked, Are you for us or for our enemies? Neither, he replied, but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.

Then Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence and asked him, What message does my Lord have for his servant? The commander of the Lord's army replied, Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.

[1:14] And Joshua did so. Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. Then the Lord said to Joshua, See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men.

March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of ram's horns in front of the ark.

On the seventh day, march around the city seven times with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout, then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in.

So Joshua, son of Nun, called the priests and said to them, Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it. And he ordered the people, Advance!

March around the city with the armed guard going ahead of the ark of the Lord. When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets before the Lord went forward, blowing their trumpets, and the ark of the Lord's covenant followed them.

[2:32] The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. But Joshua had commanded the people, Do not give a war cry.

Do not raise your voices. Do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout. So he had the ark of the Lord carried around the city, circling it once.

Then the people returned to the camp and spent the night there. Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the Lord and blowing the trumpets.

The armed men went ahead of them, and the rear guard followed the ark of the Lord while the trumpets kept sounding. So on the second day, they marched around the city once and returned to the camp.

They did this for six days. On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day, they circled the city seven times.

[3:42] The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, Shout! For the Lord has given you the city. 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. But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them.

Otherwise, you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.

When the trumpet sounded, the people shouted. And at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed. So every man charged straight in and they took the city. They devoted the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it, men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

[4:50] Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, go into the prostitute's house and bring her out and all who belong to her in accordance with your oath to her.

So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother and brothers and all who belong to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel.

Then they burned the whole city and everything in it. But they put the silver and the gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the Lord's house. But Joshua spared Rahab, the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho.

And she lives among the Israelites to this day. The Lord God has made some staggering promises in the Bible. And there's none more staggering than his promise to sinners that if we will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we will not perish but have everlasting life.

I know of no promise more amazing than that, that all of my sins can be forgiven by the blood of Jesus and win me acceptance with God forever.

[6:28] Or how about the promise that God will work everything together for the good of those who love him. that means all my bad things as well as my good things.

My worst days as well as my best days worked together for my good. About that promise that God will supply all our needs according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

Yes, even this need in my life. He will supply it. Now often there are obstacles standing in the way between you and the fulfillment of these promises.

Barriers, things that seem to make the promise to be impossible even to be fulfilled. How can my sin ever be forgiven by a holy God?

How can this problem in my life ever work together for my good? How can this need ever be supplied? Huge obstacles that refuse to budge in our life but just stand there unyielding to any pressures.

[7:51] Perhaps that's where you are this morning. Here you are and there's the promises of God and there's some huge obstacle between you and the fulfillment.

If that is you, God has something to say to you this morning. Something right here in his word.

You're not here by accident. He wants to teach you to trust him.

He wants to strengthen your faith to go on trusting him. And so he brings us to that chapter of faith. Hebrews 11.

And we are making our way through faith's hall of fame in Hebrews chapter 11 and it's full of ordinary people just like you and me who did extraordinary things.

We've been standing before the Moses exhibit for some time now and we've seen the power of faith in Moses' life. How faith enabled him to do things that he otherwise never would or could do.

[8:58] How faith enabled him to suffer things that he otherwise would never have suffered and to obtain things that he otherwise could never obtain.

the last thing that we saw Moses doing by faith was separating the Red Sea and leading over two million people through on dry land and then watching it close up over the Egyptians who tried to do the same in pursuit.

Yes, Moses is a man whose faith teaches us a lot about faith in God. And now here in Hebrews 11 the next exhibit of faith takes us 40 years forward as the Israelites come into the land of Canaan.

It's the very land that God had promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants after them. This is the land of promise that they've now come to.

Now it's not the first time they've been here is it? No, 40 years earlier they had been here. Just as soon as they had come out of Egypt under Moses God had brought them from Mount Sinai to the promised land just an 11 day journey.

[10:19] And when they arrived God said go up and take possession of it I'll fight for you as I did in Egypt. And you remember Israel's response on that first occasion was not faith but the absence of faith.

They said we can't go in the people are stronger and taller than we are we even saw giants in the land which made us feel like grasshoppers in their sight and their large and fortified cities have walls up to the sky.

so they would not believe God's promise and did not obey his command. And so because of that the Lord sent them into the school of hard knocks 40 years in a dry and dusty wilderness where all those 20 years old and over died because of their unbelief and for 40 years God exposed their lack of faith and for 40 years God demonstrated his own faithfulness even to them.

So now here they are again 40 years later back at the promised land and again they're told go in trusting in the Lord your God and his sure promises.

houses but the land is still occupied by the same people who do not want to give up their houses and land the people are no shorter their city walls are no lower than they were before and the very first city that they come to in this promised land is none other than Jericho that impenetrable citadel with its massive walls that mocked anyone who even thought about conquering these people made victory seem impossible so do you see there's an obstacle standing in the way of Israel God has promised them the promised land but between them and the promised land stood Jericho and the real problem with Jericho was its walls its walls massive walls archaeologists have unearthed some of the ruins of the past over something like 35 feet at its base and then it goes up narrower it wasn't just a thin little thing just waiting to be toppled by the wind it was a massive base at the bottom that then got smaller as it went up those kinds of walls don't fall over of themselves well that was Jericho a huge trial to their faith and we wonder have they learned anything about trusting

[13:09] God over the 40 years in God's school of faith and the answer we see is yes this time around they respond by faith and such a faith as lands them in the hall of faith Hebrews chapter 11!

so let me just pause to say that earlier failures of faith do not mean that you must remain defeated yes they had come to this place before and did not trust God but they're here the next time and they do trust God you see we're not doomed to our past experience of faith by God's grace each new trial of faith is a new opportunity to trust in the Lord and so to experience that victory that overcomes the world even our faith so whatever your past record is about trusting God or not trusting God here you are will you trust and obey God today you can break free from your past you know that the only thing that ties you to your unbelieving past is your unbelief so trust the

Lord today and break with your unbelieving past and see God do the amazing things that he has promised in his word so we're here in Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 30 and our text is just this one verse and we're learning how the obstacle of Jericho and its walls was overcome it says by faith the walls of Jericho fell after the people had marched around them for seven days now if you think that the walls of Jericho were a huge trial of faith and they were God's battle plan for taking Jericho was an even greater trial of faith!

enemies and neither he says but as commander of the armies of the Lord I am come and Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence and asked what message that he has brought to his servant and he doesn't get the message until he has heard the words take off your sandals the place where you are standing is holy and Joshua finds that the commander of the Lord's army is none other than the Lord himself just as Moses learned at the burning bush when he received his assignment that the one speaking in the burning bush that was not consumed was none other than the Lord himself and hence it was a holy place and down he went and so Joshua realizes this is the Lord himself commanding his army and he comes and he gives to

Joshua a detailed battle plan for the conquest of Jericho and what a plan it was not like any military strategy ever given completely counter intuitive there's nothing in it to appeal to the military strategist at all there's no earth ramps built up to go over the wall there's no tunneling under the wall there was no battering ram to bring down the wall there was no Trojan horse to set deceptively in front of the wall hoping they'd open the gates and let it in and then they could swing the gates open and bring the whole army and no deceptive plan to draw them out of the city there was none of and blow the trumpets and then to shout and he gives them very specific instructions doesn't he we took the time to read them the armed guard half the armed guard out in front and the priest blowing the trumpets and then the ark of the covenant of the

[17:55] Lord and the rear guard and behind and presumably then the whole company of Israel following behind nobody is to say a word just the trumpets it's to be quiet otherwise until the final loud command of the trumpets then they're to shout and in this way you're to march around the city once a day for six days in a row but on the seventh day after you've circled the city seven times I

want you to have the priest sound the long blast have all the people give the loud shout and the walls of the city will collapse and the people will go in every man straight in will go up every man straight in for I have delivered Jericho into your hands now who's ever heard of a battle plan like that marching blowing and shouting if God did not show up and do something supernatural there would just be a lot of noise being made that's all there was no part of the plan that appealed to human wisdom and ingenuity there was nothing that looked like it would work nothing that would make

Joshua the strategist say yeah Lord I can see how that that's the way to get in none of that he doesn't even throw a bone to human wisdom it's a plan that on every page says will you trust me he's going to have to march by faith all the way counting on God's promise to act there's nothing here for sight to rest upon and of course it had to be that way didn't it because the whole issue at hand was faith it always is the whole issue was the matter of faith the real battle at Jericho was the battle of faith within Joshua and the Israelites a battle against unbelief unbelief unbelief was a far greater enemy than these Canaanites and that had been the test 40 years earlier and unbelief had won out to their great loss and so now they're back and the

Lord devises a battle plan that requires faith from first to last Joshua had never seen a wall like this go down on its own but then faith doesn't need to see does it verse 1 of chapter 11 says that faith is being certain of what we do not see and that's the faith that Joshua had before the Lord's command and promise now I would suggest that God is doing this sort of thing all the time in our own lives in big and small ways he's putting our faith to the tests he's bringing us up before many trials in our lives many commands in his word that are intentionally designed to test our faith how many trials how many commands are those are like those troublesome obstacles standing between you and God's promise and it's all will you trust me or will you lean on your own understanding will you trust me with all your heart or will you lean on your own understanding will you trust me enough to obey me in all that I say and send your way he comes looking for faith that's the issue it's the issue we're constantly bumping into these tests of faith aren't we so there's two year old

Johnny living up to the title of the terrible twos and he's demanding to be the one in the house that sets his bedtime and meal times and play times and nap times and he's only obeying you if he wants to and oh you spanked him before for refusing to obey but it's just not working you say and so you're ready to abandon God's plan and try to find something else that might work better for your family just lighten up be more affirming they're just being boys don't make an issue out of it he'll grow out of it sooner or later there's better ways than spanking and God says do not withhold discipline from a child if you punish him with the rod he will not die punish him with the rod and save his soul from death he who spares the rod hates his son but he who loves him is careful to discipline him moms don't give up on God's battle plan for stubborn sons don't lean on your own understanding or anyone else's human wisdom when God has already spoken clearly in his word let

Johnny's stubborn will be met with a stubborn love and trust in God yes discipline him and spank him with love and self control but don't abandon God's plan for something that is more appealing to human wisdom the Lord puts a Bible in one hand and a rod in the other and says bring them up in the instruction and discipline of the Lord the battle with Johnny is first a battle with your own unbelief you see your own unbelief will I take God at his word even when many around me are saying spanking give it up mom this is the 21st century for crying out loud there are better ways to correct a stubborn son or maybe it's the test of faith that meets every church how are we to proceed with

[24:11] Christ's command to build the church preach and he tells us preach the word in season out of season preach the word but the people don't really care to have the Bible preached today they're looking for others preach the word and we must not say well what do we think would build the church he has spoken it's a time not to set aside his battle plan but to embrace it by faith he's the builder of his church and we embrace his plan by faith perhaps the test of faith is some unwanted trial God has ordered for you and it seems to stand as Jericho a barrier between you and happiness and I need to tell you there's a plan there's a will of God to do and there's a will of God to suffer and he's glorified by both when you suffer with a gratitude and a trust in God that he knows best that glorifies him it's

God himself who has brought you before your Jericho that impossible situation you're not there by accident he led Israel right to Jericho and he will lead you right into situations that you say but it's

impossible I can't go this way will you trust him with your life will you trust him with your happiness will you lean upon his promise to work all things together for good even this thing whatever it is will you put your hope in his word even when there is little if any good to be seen at all on the horizon you see just as with Joshua God's word and plan will test our faith to the max and in all your Jerichos the real battle is always the battle within you when God is saying will you trust me enough to obey me rather than leaning on your own understanding you know we can't help but notice in the account that we were read from that before

Jericho there was a time of reckoning for Joshua when he had to remember who the commander in chief was no no he was the leader of Israel and so his question was are you for us or for them and he hears neither don't think of me as a straggling soldier out here and you're the boss and no Joshua you need to remember who you are and who I am I'm the commander in chief and you need to bow and receive instruction from me I wonder have you understood who the real commander in chief is have you taken off your sandals and found your rightful place before him on your face on your face reverencing him saying what message does my Lord have for his servant have you recognized the

Lord Jesus as your Lord and seen yourself as his servant and and is that the way you come before the Bible and you come as his servant what message does my Lord have for his servant that's how we find Joshua prepared for the great test in his life this plan for conquering Jericho there is a connection between worshiping and trusting the God that you worship is the same God that you trust in or don't trust in do you have a little God you worship or do you worship the God of scripture who reigns over all and therefore you trust him because of who he is the connection between worship and faith we see faith worshiping and then faith rising and going and doing all that God had told him to do and so what a joy to see Joshua and the Israelites marching! around the walls of Jericho now why did they do that what caused them to do that and our text says faith by faith they marched around Jericho for seven days marching is what they did faith is why they did it and there is an unbreakable connection between faith and works what we believe and what we do James 2 is all about that connection isn't it all true faith in God produces obedience to what he says trusting God led Joshua to go and do exactly what he said there was no changing of the order of what God told him there was exact obedience to what he said why because he believed him and where there is true faith there's always this corresponding produced obedience it's the obedience of faith it's the fruit of faith the effect of faith the evidence of faith and if you have real faith in [29:45] God then you will do what he says now appreciate the power of faith faith caused them to do what they otherwise never would do without faith what would have Joshua and the Israelites done they'd have done what the others did 40 years earlier turned and run in unbelief in disobedience the two go together but we see the power of faith moving them to do what they otherwise would never do without it they believed and acted accordingly and the author of Hebrews wants us to know that all this marching is faith in action we'll not understand the march the seven day march unless we realize this that's what faith looks like it takes God and his word and it obeys this is a march of faith every step of it is a march of faith and so they start marching around the city and the people are peering down over the walls and the peak holes in the wall and there's there's not a word spoken by

Israel the trumpets blaring ark of God carried! soldiers front and behind and their faith looked like folly to men of unbelief inside of Jericho men who live by sight look on the people of God walking by faith and say what fools they are so it's back to camp the next day the same trial of faith I wonder if we realize this it wasn't just once it wasn't just well there's this great trial of faith okay yeah we're going to do it no it's the next day all over again there's the walls of Jericho they haven't fallen there's no white flag lifted up above them and surrender what are we going to do they headed out and marched just as God had said once around back camp sleep rise did it again every day they face this struggle test of faith will we lean!

and trust and obey him and they keep trusting and keep obeying and on the seventh day they're up early and by faith they march around the city seven times and the trumpets blaring all the while at the end they give the loud blaring of the trumpets and the whole of Israel shouts and the walls go down they go in take the whole city put it to the flame with only Rahab and her family spared and it was all energized and accomplished Hebrews 11 tells us by faith never read or listen to the story of Jericho's walls without this burned in your mind that was faith in action that's what faith looked like standing before the obstacle of Jericho some of you wake up every morning to the same obstacle

it's not going away and it probably won't for the rest of your life and you need faith every morning to get up and march to put one foot in front of the other to do the next thing that

God has called you to do to believe to obey that's why this passage is in the Bible to strengthen your faith to help you rise to each new trust him against whatever obstacle is before you how did the walls of Jericho fall well I'll tell you how they didn't fall if you're looking for some fun just look up some liberal theologians and let them explain to you how these walls came down you know it's sad when you don't believe that God breaks into this world when you buy into the idea this is just a closed system a natural system everything that happens in the universe here's God outside if he exists at all but he does not penetrate this is all explainable by nature everything that happens oh what a poor poor people we are if

God did not invade our planet in the incarnation and in his works of providence and salvation so here's the explanation of one we see the reason God had them march around each day was just to kind of lull and sleep they're not doing anything they're not fighting they're just marching after the fifth or sixth day they got kind of tired oh they're doing it again today it's the seventh day oh look they're doing it seven times and they're not on guard as they would have been and there's this loud shout and there's chaos and confusion and suddenly there's a band of Israelites that charged with such force upon the walls that it seemed like they fell of themselves and on they went in and there's no supernatural and I assure you that is not how the walls of Jericho fell it wasn't the vibration from the voices of the two million some of you have been in a football stadium and you've heard a hundred thousand shout and roar and it seems to shake doesn't it think but maybe a woman's voice can break a glass but we cannot bring walls down no matter how many are shouting at the top of our voice these were massive!

[35 : 23] no it wasn't! the fact is it was supernatural it was God acting on behalf of his people God breaking in and showing his omnipotence on their behalf now precisely how God did that you'll have to ask him did he use an earthquake did he did he I don't know what he did you can ask him that someday but what we do need to know is what he's already told us in his word by faith by faith the walls of Jericho fell that's the most important thing to know you don't need to know anything else that it happened by faith faith is said to have brought down these mighty walls because faith lays hold of the power of God and brings him into the field of battle and so faith does what God does faith engages the unseen

God to act according to his promise faith can do what is impossible for men because faith lays hold of the God of the impossible and so in one sense we would have to say well it was God's power that brought the walls of Jericho down right but without their faith their faith in God the walls of Jericho would not have budged an inch and that's why God chooses to say it was not my power that brought them down but he speaks in shorthand and says by faith the walls of Jericho fell down he attributes it to their faith when by faith they marched by faith they obeyed by faith they shout God brought down the wall now you see there is a connection then between our faith and God's power and the writer to the Hebrews is showing us that and it makes me wonder how many how much of God's power do I experience in my life or I should say how little of God's power do I experience because of a lack of faith God brought down the walls when Israel believed him and took him at his word faith in what then we must ask faith needs an object doesn't it we've seen this in Hebrews 11 it's not just faith in faith it's not faith in feelings it's not faith in what we see in Hebrews 11 faith is always the response to some revelation from God to what God has said in other words we don't write our own ticket for how we want God's power to act and then say I'm believing God for this you've heard that I'm just going to write my own ticket for what I want to see God's power do and then I'm trusting God for this no we believe what he says in his written word we believe every promise that he's given us every word that he's spoken and we trust him to do all that he has said here marching and shouting and walls falling was not Joshua's own idea that he claimed!

God's power through faith for no God revealed it and Joshua believed And it's the same with us. Be careful of trying to make out your faith as if you control God and what he does then.

[39 : 19] And you just want every obstacle in your path just to be obliterated like Jericho. Oh, you have not been given the promise that every trial will be obliterated in your life.

Not here and now. There are scores of promises that God has made and that's what we lay hold of by faith. What the Bible says, God says. And it's here in the Bible that our faith has found a resting place.

So what promises of Scripture are you looking to in the midst of your obstacles? I go back to Romans 8.28.

Are you clinging to that old, old promise that God has made? It does apply to that. A barrier. That he will work even that together for your good if you are one who loves him and is called according to his purpose.

The Scriptures. I wait for the Lord. My soul waits. And in his word I put my hope. Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

[40 : 24] All that God has promised and said in his word. So what did we see this morning? Well, God made a promise to give the land of Canaan to the Israelites.

How were they going to gain access to the inheritance of the promised land? That's God's lesson at Jericho. It will not be by their energy or ingenuity, but by God's power acting on their behalf in response to faith.

It will not be done by what they do, but what God does in response to their faith. That's what we see. And I ask you, dear sinner friend, how are you ever going to get into God's holy heaven? Well, you see, it will not be because of anything you have done in the way of good deeds to somehow earn your way into heaven.

You don't have enough. You don't have any perfect deeds. No, it will be by faith. The Israelites enter the promised land by faith in God.

[41 : 34] How will any sinner enter the promised land of the new heavens and the new earth, the home of righteousness? In the same way, by faith in what God does for sinners, not in what we do for ourselves.

You see, the Israelites of the Old Testament stand as a type and as a pattern to all the people of God. And so we have it here that just as God promised to bring Israel out of bondage in Egypt and to bring them into the promised land, in the same way, he has made promises to all who trust in him to bring them out of bondage to sin and to bring them home to heaven at last, perfect in Christ.

It's the same. It's by faith in what he will do. But just as Jericho stood in the way, trying to keep them from possessing their inheritance, there are enemies to everyone to keep you out of heaven.

There is the world, and it doesn't want you going to heaven. And so with allurements and threats and persecutions and telling you it's not worth living according to God's way, give it up.

The world, the world alluring, pulling us down by paths that don't go to heaven but go to destruction. And then there's the flesh, that force of gravity within, that for every step we make toward heaven pulls us the other way.

[43 : 16] It says, no, you're not going there. You're going this way. And you're going to have to crucify the flesh if you're going to take any step heavenward because it stands as an obstacle to keep you from going to heaven.

And then there's the devil and his hellish crew, and they straddle the way to heaven, as Bunyan has it in Pilgrim's Progress. There it is, straddling the way. You're not going any further.

And he resists us. He tempts us. You see, there are those that would keep us out of our promised land, out of that new heavens and new earth where righteousness dwells.

How are we going to make it? Well, the Lord Jesus, the commander in chief, he knows all about our Jerichos.

He knows all about our world and our flesh and the devil. He knows all the things that's happening to us. And he says, just trust me.

[44 : 20] Trust me. Lean hard on me. Trust my promises. Nothing can thwart my purposes to save you from your sins and to bring you safely home to heaven at last.

You have stubborn sins that stand like the walls of Jericho. I'm not letting you go. Jesus has power to break the power of reigning sin.

Nothing can thwart his purpose to save. And he says, trust me. And you'll find heaven is stronger than hell. And you'll find that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

And you'll find that this is the victory that overcomes the world. Even your faith. Your faith. Christian. My unbeliever.

Friend. Trusting in the Savior. You will make it. Not one will be missing. You see, tempted and tried Christian.

[45 : 23] It's not just that he's on our side. It is rather that he has brought us over onto his side. There's a difference. The cause is his, you see.

It's like Joshua. Are you on our side or their side? And the Lord says, oh no. You've got it all wrong. You're on my side. It's my cause. I'm the commander.

What a wonderful difference that is. To think all that Jesus did to bring us over onto his side. There he is in heaven. And here we are sinners on earth.

He takes our humanity upon himself. Becomes a man and he suffers and is tempted in every way like we are. Yet he never sins. That means he keeps the commandments perfectly.

Every command that I break, he kept perfectly. So he has a righteousness to give that fits us for heaven. And then he took our sins against a holy God and he took them on himself.

[46 : 22] And he went to the place of punishment at Calvary. And he said, punish me and pardon them. And all the wrath of God that would have been mine for eternity fell on my Savior.

And because he paid it all, I am free. I'm forgiven. There's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. You see, this is what Jesus has done to bring us over.

And then he took my death and my burial. And he's in the grave and he's dead. And then he rose, as we sang this morning, triumphant. And ascended to the highest place where he now reigns over everything that concerns me.

There's nothing that can come into my life but what he okays and says, Yes, that's my purpose for John's salvation. Bring it on. Bring it to him. In just this way, not any more than this, just this much. And I'll supply him with the grace that he needs. And he's pouring in his grace. This is what he does to bring us over onto his side.

[47 : 28] And oh, what he will not do for those that he bought with his blood. Everything he has is for you now, dear Christian. All his wisdom and power. All his love and faithfulness.

All his wrath and justice. It's for you. No longer against you. There you stand against all of your obstacles, seeking to keep you from heaven.

And he knows your weakness. And he meets even our smallest faith with the power to move mountains. Isn't that what Jesus said?

You just have faith as small as a mustard seed. He can say to this mountain, to this Jericho, to these walls, be gone. And this is our Savior.

He's brought us over onto his side. Oh, and he's saying, trust me. So there's Joshua and there's the believing Israelites of old. And they're part of that great cloud of witnesses that is shouting by their example to us who are still in the battle, still in the race.

[48 : 32] Fight on, brother. Sister, don't give it up now. It's just a little further and you'll be home. Keep trusting. He's faithful.

He's almighty. He's gracious. He's kind. Don't bail now. Don't lean on your own. Understand. Keep following. Whoever believes in him will never be put to shame.

We took him at his word. And look at us now. The shouts of encouragement to our faith. So this week, in various ways, you'll be put to the same test of faith.

Trials and temptations that will seek to move you from Christ and his word. The great captain of our salvation is for us.

We are on his side. He fights for us. Trust in him with all your heart. And lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him.

[49 : 32] And he will direct your paths. He's put in our hands weapons to fight with that are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Use them. The weapon of faith, of prayer, trusting in our Savior. Let's pray. We thank you, Father, for the Lord Jesus, the captain of all your armies.

And we thank you that through his saving work, he has brought many of us over to his side. And we are his. We have no greater comfort than to not belong to ourselves, but to our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

The cost of his own blood is fully paid for all of our sins and has completely delivered us from the dominion of the devil. Thank you for such a Savior.

Thank you that he is the author and the finisher of our faith. Apart from him, we would have no faith. Thank you that he is the perfecter of our faith.

[50 : 47] And so we must thank you for every trial that you bring into our lives to strengthen our faith. And we must ask you, Father, forgive us for all the unbelieving responses we have had.

We do believe that help our unbelief. Thank you that you know our weakness. Thank you that you've put these things into your word to strengthen our faith.

Come to us now, then. And by your own precious word, give us strength to trust you again this day. And every day to the praise of your love and faithfulness that you've covenanted to your people for time and eternity.

And thank you that one day we'll join. Every one of us who've been purchased by the blood of Jesus will join that company above, singing the praises of our great God and King.

We pray in his name. Amen. Amen. Amen.