

Studies in Joshua 03 - Conquering the Land

by Alden Gannett

The sermon emphasizes the importance of holiness and obedience in achieving spiritual victory as illustrated through the conquests in the book of Joshua.

Duration: 45:45

Scripture: Joshua 9:27, Joshua 10:4, Joshua 13:7, Psalm 15:1, Psalm 15:4

Topics: "Joshua"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the preparation and conquest of Joshua as he leads the Israelites into the land of Canaan. The sermon begins by discussing Joshua's encounter with a man with a drawn sword, who reveals himself as the captain of the Lord's host. Joshua falls to the ground in worship and receives instructions to remove his shoes, as he is standing on holy ground. The sermon then highlights the preparation of Joshua and the people, including their faith in crossing the Jordan River and the observance of circumcision and the Passover. The preacher emphasizes the importance of faith in obtaining victory and encourages the congregation to trust in God for their impossible burdens.

Transcript

In the morning hour, we looked at Russia, and then this morning Israel, and tomorrow morning Egypt. What does the Bible say about the future of Egypt, and the future of Egypt in her relation to Israel? Tonight, we're turning to Joshua chapter 5, and Lord willing, we'll move on through chapter 12. I understand you don't go to bed till midnight here, so relax, and we'll have a great evening together.

May we pray together. Father, in the name of Christ, minister the word to us afresh. May the Holy Spirit minister to us as we have need tonight.

Thank you for a wonderful day we've enjoyed together, for the fellowship throughout the day, the blessing of the Lord in this place. May we continue to enjoy that blessing tonight as we behold thee anew in thy wonderful word. So minister to great grace to each of our hearts, we pray in our Savior's name.

Amen. After preparation comes conquest. We've been studying together the preparation of Joshua to lead Israel through Jordan, and then to conquer the land of Canaan.

Then we've seen the preparation of the people as they witnessed the example of Joshua, as they received the encouragement of the word from the spies, how the Lord was preparing the hearts of the people. Fear,

fear took hold of their hearts. Then we saw the exercise of faith in their crossing Jordan, God parting the waters of the sea, and the memorials left behind of the faithfulness of God, of the power of God to the people of Israel.

And then those final touches of preparation, that touch of witness through circumcision, that touch of worship through the Passover, and then finally the word as we saw by application that leads us to our Lord. Now chapter 5, verse 13, where the chapter division and my judgment should have taken place. Here it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand.

And Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

Joshua is now prepared to move for conquest. He's moving into the impossible, the central campaign, the southern campaign, the northern campaign, this great land of Canaan. Here he is with a handful, so to speak.

God says one final word, Joshua, before we move forward. I want you to have the encouragement. I want you to know there's a captain of the Lord of hosts who will go before you.

Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. No matter what you'll be facing, Jericho, Ai, Jerusalem, that group in the south, there west of the waters of Merim, in the north. Matter's not the enemy.

I'll give you the victory. But, Joshua, I insist on one thing. Holiness.

Holiness. Joshua receives the same kind of instruction Moses did at the burning bush, didn't he? The place whereon thou standest is holy ground, Moses. Remove your sandals, Joshua.

You're Moses' successor. The principle Moses had to learn, but did not quite learn. You must learn holiness.

It's a beautiful word. In fact, the Old Testament speaks of the beauty of holiness, doesn't it? The word holiness, as you know, means separation--separation unto the Lord. And there's nothing more beautiful than a life that's totally separated unto the Lord, a life totally dedicated to God.

Joshua, I can't use you. And, Joshua, I cannot give you victory unless you are totally clay in my hands. Holiness.

Every one of us here tonight has gone through that struggle. Mine was that as a teenager, facing the call of God upon my life to preach and teach the Word. My prayer was real simple.

Lord, I will not be a preacher. Lord, I will not be a missionary. Now, just what is it you want me to do? I lacked holiness.

There was not that total willingness to do the will of God. But there's one here tonight who has yet to give your life to God. There will be no conquest.

There will be no advance in spiritual things, no moving forward in the work of God until God has you. Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy. That's the final word.

Now, victory. Jericho, chapter 6. Now, Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel. None went out, and none came in.

Here's a strategic port. They're strategically located. Francis Schaeffer says, just about seven acres.

But there it was, well secured. And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, notice, I have given unto thine hand Jericho, and its king, and the mighty men of valor. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, go round about the city once.

Thou shalt do six days. And seven, the seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horn. And the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times.

And the priests shall blow the trumpets, and it shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the shout of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout. And the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up, every man straight before him." From a human point of view, that doesn't make any sense at all, does it? But God. You remember the theme of our book is that the just shall live by what? Faith.

We possess our possessions by faith, and God is going to give the victory. And every strategy we have throughout the book gives God the glory, doesn't it? Because it is God who gives the victory exactly the way He wants it regarding your impossible burden that you brought with you tonight, that problem that's still unresolved in your life, in your home, in your assembly back home where you live and where you work and where you serve. The God of Joshua is your God tonight if you're saved by His wonderful grace, and God wants to get the glory and the victory in your life, your burden, your need tonight.

"...Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, let's go, let seven priests bear the seven trumpets of ram's horn before the ark of the Lord. And he said unto the people, Pass on and compass the city, and let him whose arm passed on before the ark of the Lord. And it came to pass when Joshua had spoken unto the people that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of ram's horn passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them." Verse 14, the second day they compassed the city once, returned into the camp.

So did they six days. You remember the story well. And now what happens? The instructions, verse 15, "...it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early about the dawning of the day, compassed the city after the same manner seven times.

Only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city, and the city shall be a curse, even it and all that are in it to the Lord. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

And ye in every way keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of bronze, and iron are consecrated unto the Lord. They shall come into the treasury of the Lord." You see, the principle was that the firstfruits belonged to the Lord, so they were not to touch the firstfruits of the land of Canaan.

The first victory, the city of Jericho. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets. It came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout that the wall fell down flat.

So the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city, and they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox, sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword. But Joshua said to the two men that had spied out the country, Go to the harlot's house. And you remember how God wonderfully spared Rahab and her family as they obeyed the word of the Lord.

Verse 26, And Joshua charged them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, who riseth up and buildeth this city. Verse 27, So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was proclaimed throughout all the country. A simple story.

What was the key? Faith. What was the key? Obedience. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down.

It wasn't that the walls were built on sandy soil, as some suggest. It wasn't the vibrations from the shout, as some people suggest. No, no, a miracle from God.

There the walls fell down, but God spared Rahab and her family. They believed God. They obeyed God.

Is that someone's need tonight? Are you standing before an impossible situation in your life, in your family, in your circumstances, and you're wondering why something hasn't happened? I ask you tonight, do you have the divine strategy? By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down. God told them the first day, the second day, the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day, the sixth day, the seventh day, do it my way. And the walls fell down.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to what? Trust and obey. It's that simple. Chapter 7, But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing.

For Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zer of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethhaven on the east side of Bethel, and spoke unto them, saying, O go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.

And they returned to Joshua and said unto him, O let not all the people go up, let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai, and make not all the people to labor there, why there but few. We can handle all this by ourselves, eh? So they went up there to the people, about three thousand men, and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men, for they chased them from before the gate, even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down.

Wherefore the hearts of the people melted and became as water." Defeat at Ai after a glorious, glorious victory. Ever been there? Yes. Look at the response.

Joshua tore his clothes. He fell to the earth upon his face before the Ark of the Covenant until the eventide. He and the elders of Israel then put dust upon their heads, and Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou it all brought this people over to Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Joshua, where did you get that idea? Hmm? Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side of Jordan.

That doesn't sound like Joshua. You ever been rebuked as I have? That doesn't sound like you. Hmm? O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turn their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall surround us, and cut off our name from the earth.

And what wilt thou do unto thy great name? The Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up. Why liest thou upon thy face? Israel hath sinned. That's why there's defeat.

Joshua? They have also transgressed my covenant, which I commended them. For they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Israel has sinned.

Do I speak to a defeated Christian tonight? Is this the reason? You remember God spoke up and said, Get the tribes before you, the families. I'll put my finger on the man. Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done.

Hideth not from me. Did you notice the language? We give glory to God when we confess our sin. And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done.

When I saw among the spoils of beautiful Babylonian garment two hundred shekels of silver, a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them and took them. Did you notice the sequence? I saw, I coveted, I took. Isn't that how it works? Sin starts here, doesn't it? The way it was with David, the king, wasn't it? When he saw Bathsheba, he saw, he coveted, he took.

Do you notice how explicit Achan is? Oh, I saw that beautiful Babylonian garment, those two hundred shekels of silver, those fifty shekels of gold. He was specific about his confession, beloved. Are you? Am I? Do we bow down before God and say, Thus and thus have I done? For you see, what I committed was something definite and specific.

So I am to confess, not that I have sinned, or say to God, If we sin today, forgive me. But rather I took that Babylonian garment. I took those two hundred shekels of silver and those fifty shekels of gold.

Do we wait tonight? Someone here, because we haven't become explicit with God and haven't been definite in the matter of dealing with a sin of our own heart. Did you notice that sin affected Achan? It affected his family, it affected his nation. For as we go on to read the rest of the chapter, Achan stoned, and his family is under the rock pile with him.

They shared in his sin. Israel hath sinned, we heard back in verse eleven. Achan, his family, his nation.

I do not live unto myself, beloved. You do not live unto yourself tonight. We do have a sphere of influence in what I do affects my family, in what I do affects my church, affects my college, affects my nation.

Is America richer tonight because of your walk with God, because of your holiness and righteousness? Or is America poorer tonight, morally and spiritually, because of your walk with God and your failure in spiritual things? Israel has sinned. I've been a Christian fifty years, and you're supposed to say you don't look that old. Thank you very much.

I was saved before I was born, you see. No, not quite. But I haven't found any other way in fifty years to deal with sin than confess it.

Have you? See? It doesn't work any other way. Excusing it doesn't work. Sweeping it under the rug doesn't work.

Saying it didn't happen doesn't work. Thus and thus have I done is the only way it works. That's right, beloved.

There's victory now. Conquest of Ai in chapter eight. The Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed.

Take all the people of war, no resting on the flesh here, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given unto thy hand the King of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land. Now that sin is confessed, now that we're right with God, now that holiness prevails, there'll be victory.

And thou shalt do to Ai and its king as thou didst unto Jericho and its king. Only the spoil of it and the cattle thereof shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves. The firstfruits now have been given to God.

Lay thee an ambush for the city behind it. Without going to the details, you remember 30,000 men now go to Ai, and Joshua takes 5,000 of them. An ambush is planned as God instructs.

And now, verse 18, the Lord said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thine hand toward Ai, for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city. The ambush arose quickly out of their place.

They ran as soon as they had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city, and took it, and hastened, and set the city on fire. Where there was defeat, there is now victory, when sin has been confessed. God wants to pause for a few moments, so to speak, in chapter 8, verse 30, and say, before we pursue this matter of conquest any farther, let's pause and reflect and obey the words of the book of Deuteronomy.

Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal. As Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man had lifted up any iron. And they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings.

Burnt offerings, you remember from Leviticus 1, were offerings of complete consecration, voluntarily offered and totally consumed upon the altar. Peace offering resulted from the burnt offering, for when one is right with God and all is yielded to him, wonderful peace of God rules and reigns in our hearts. Mount Gerizim, half of Israel there.

Mount Ebal, half of Israel there. The offerings were from Mount Ebal because of the curse. Some of you have been to Israel, and you've stood right there, about 500 feet at the base of those two mountains, and you can actually speak at the base of one mountain and be heard at the base of the other mountain.

I've not been there. I've set foot in Tel Aviv, looking forward to a day when we can go to that land. But I was down in Mexico, and some of you here tonight remember Moncho very well, came to Southeastern Bible College there from Merida, and he took me to old ruins, Indian ruins.

He said, Brother Garrett, you stand here with your face away from the athletic field. He went across to the other end of that field, and he turned, and his back was to mine, and he spoke in a normal voice as I now speak to you. As he faced the opposite direction, probably 300 to 400 feet away, and I could hear him as easily as I can hear my own voice right now as I speak to you.

God's own empathy, if you please. God did that there. He wanted Israel to hear the blessings and the cursings, and to be reminded there is blessing for obedience, there is cursing for disobedience.

So he pauses after Ai, and reminds them of the words of the Lord. Reflect upon that as we move now to chapter 9. Oh, hear Gibeon! Craft of the Gibeonites! It came to pass when all the kings were on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the Shephelah, and in all the borders of the great sea over against Lebanon. The Hittite, the Amorite, Canaanite, Perizzite, Hivite, the Jebusite heard thereof that they gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua and with Israel with one accord.

They said, We can't let this thing go on. Let's get together and settle this matter, and handle this crowd that's come in. And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho to Ai, they did work willingly.

Sounds satanic, doesn't it? And they went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wineskins old and torn and bound up, and old and patched shoes upon their feet, and old garments upon them, and all the bread of their provision was dry and moldy. And they came to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him and to the men of Israel, We've come from a far country. That's a dumb red lie.

Now, therefore, make ye a league with us. They are scared to death. And the men of Israel said unto them, The Hivites, perhaps ye dwell among us.

Good question. And they did. How shall we make a league with you? Oh, they said unto Joshua, What were thy sermons? And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye, and where come ye? Oh, and they go through it again.

Oh, we've come from a very far country. Look at this moldy bread. Why? We took it out of our ovens.

Look at our shoes. They're worn out. Look at them.

Verse 14, And the men took of their provisions, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. The failure of so many of us, they reasoned about the issue. They didn't take time to pray.

And Joshua made peace with them, made a league with them, and let them live. And the princes of the congregation swore unto them, took an oath, and it came to pass at the end of three days, after they had made a league with them, that they had heard that they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them. And the children of Israel journeyed and came unto their cities on the third day.

And now their cities were Gibeon, and Shephardah, and Beeroth, and Kiriath, and Jerim. And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.

Listen, they lied to us. We don't have to keep this oath, they were saying. But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel.

Now, therefore, we may not touch them. Who was right? Is it all right to go back on an oath? Slip over to Psalm 15 with me for just a moment. We may need this one of these days.

Psalm 15, verse 1. And, Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? Slip down to verse 4. He that sweareth to his own hurt can what? Changeth not. They had made a vow. The princes were right.

They had to honor their word. Remember the day when a man's word was as good as his bond. Verse 27 of Joshua 9, And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, even unto this day in the place which he should choose.

Jericho, with its wicked, wicked, wicked city, suggests worldliness, doesn't it? Ai, with their leaning upon the arm of flesh. Why, it's just a few folks. We can handle this all by ourselves.

That suggests the flesh. Gibeonites, with the subtlety of the enemy, suggests satanic warfare, doesn't it? Here the world, the flesh, and the devil, all subjects of their own, which we could do well to linger on tonight. How does one gain victory over the world? This is the victory over the world, even our what? Faith.

How does one gain victory over the flesh? Walk in the Spirit. Faith. He shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

How does one gain victory over Satan? Throw off that shield of faith. So the theme of the book of Joshua is the very way to overcome our enemies in our day, the world, the flesh, and the devil. Let us be reminded anew tonight of God's way of giving victory.

All right, that's the central campaign. In chapter 10 we turn to the southern campaign, and in a moment chapter 11, the northern campaign, as they move on toward conquest. Now it came to pass when Adonai Zedek, king of Jerusalem there in the south, the leader there, had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it, as he had done to Jericho and her king.

So he had done to Ai and her king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities. And because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty, and they were afraid of more defectors, and so he rallied his group together, and said, Let's move in and conquer Joshua and the host of Israel. And they gathered together, verse 5, and made war against them.

Verse 8, Mediaghan sent unto Joshua to the camp of Gilgal, saying, Relax not thine hand from thy servants. Come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us. For all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.

The folks in the south decided to punish Gibeon, so Gibeon cried for help to Joshua and the people of Israel with whom they had made a league. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, all the mighty men of valor, and the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not, for I have delivered them into thine hand. There shall not a man of them stand before thee.

Joshua, therefore, came up with them suddenly, went up from Gilgal all night, and the Lord routed them, notice, before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethphoron, and so on. And it came to pass as they fled from before Israel, you remember there were hailstones, Texas-sized hailstones, if you please, and it says that God killed more people with

a hailstone than He did with a sword. And then Joshua said, I need a little more time.

A little more time. Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon, verse 12, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

Is this not written in the book of Joshua? God uses Joshua and the armies? God uses the hailstones from heaven? God prolongs a day, another miracle? What variety like the snowflake? What variety like the fingerprint? God wants to get all the glory as He gets the glory here. Joshua. God extends the day for greater victory.

Someone asked some years ago of a dear one, Are you the Joshua that made the moon stand still? He said, No, I'm the Joshua that made the moon shine still. That was a North Alabama story, I do believe. Victory! Victory given by God.

The chapter goes on and speaks of more glorious victory. Verse 29, the southern campaign completed now, and we slip down to verse 40, So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the Negev, and of the Shephelah, and of the springs, and all their kings. He left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded.

And Joshua smote them from Kadesh Barnea. I wonder how Joshua reasoned as he was there, for he had been there about forty years before, remember? And it came back with a report, What have you meant for us? Let's go up at once and possess the land. Now he proves what he and Caleb affirmed.

God was able. God was able for the land of Abba. In chapter 11, the northern campaign, the folks in the north are now scared to death.

Ai, Jericho, and Missenter, Jerusalem and company in the south now defeated. One sector in the north remains, and it came to pass when Jabin king of Hazor had heard these things that he sent to Jobad king of Maiden, to the king of Shimmeron, to the king of Exasheth, and to the kings that were on the north. And making the list, he says, Let's gather together and fight against Israel.

Verse five, And the Lord said unto Joshua, O be not afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time will I deliver them all up slain before Israel. Thou shalt hamstring their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. And Joshua and company had no horses.

Joshua and company had no chariots of iron. God says, I'll give you the victory. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Mirim suddenly, and they fell upon them, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them and chased them unto Sidon in that whole area.

Verse 15, And the Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua. He left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses. So Joshua took all that land.

Verse 18, Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. Verse 20, For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts. Verse 23, So Joshua took the whole land according to all that the Lord said unto Moses.

And Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribe, and the land rested from war. What victories! What glorious victories! What glorious victories in the face of impossible circumstances! And he goes on and gives the record of those victories in chapter 12. Every one of us

came into this service tonight with unanswered prayers.

Every one of us came into this service tonight with a burden. Every one of us with a problem. Every one of us with that which we prayed over most earnestly this very day.

An unsolved problem, an unmet need, an area of defeat somewhere for that which is before us that looks humanly impossible. Say, aren't our problems pretty small after these chapters 6-12 of Joshua? God gave the victory. Is there someone tonight burdened about a loved one, a friend, a neighbor that's not saved? And you come to the conclusion, I wonder if God can save him.

I remember one time in a meeting a dear lady said to me, my husband's impossible. And I almost laughed in her face because my wife's informed me that all husbands are impossible, you know. But thank God I caught it.

I caught it because she was deadly in earnest because she was afraid her husband would never be saved. Don't you think they thought Saul of Tarsus was impossible? Don't you think that? I believe if I'd been a believer back in that day of the early church with a Saul of Tarsus around, I would have said that there's one fellow that'll never get saved. And there was nothing more surprising to Saul of Tarsus on that Damascus road than that he met Jesus Christ and he changed his life, eh? And he goes on to say, God have mercy upon me, to Timothy.

If he had mercy upon me, he could have mercy on anyone, hmm? We had a boy at college like this years ago at Houghton where I met my sweetheart. He was going off to war and the campus had a special, special burden for him to pray. And we prayed and we prayed and we prayed and the whole campus somehow sensed the need.

He was a PK, you know about preacher's kids. I learned in Guatemala three kinds of kids, PKs, MKs, and OKs. Well, I knew what PKs were because we had four and I knew what MKs were, but I said, what are OKs? They said, other kids.

Here was a PK. Revival meeting came, the last series of meetings before his going off to war. We asked God to save him.

Second Friday night of the two-week meeting, he said in the barbershop, I don't care if I go to hell or not. He was that blatant about his unbelief. Sunday morning, he wasn't there in the meeting.

Sunday afternoon, special prayer again for God to save him. Sunday night we were gathered together in that Houghton church holding 500 professors and townspeople and students. I looked all over and he wasn't there.

I said, Lord, you promised to answer prayer. Preacher preached the gospel, gave the invitation in that Wesleyan church. During the invitation hymn, the front door of the church opened up and that young man we'd been praying for walked down that center aisle and knelt there at the altar of prayer.

And I rushed down from where I was and knelt beside him and had the joy of leading him to Christ. And I said, son, how in the world did you get here? He said, I was in my dorm on a snowy February night, writing a letter back home to mom and dad and realized that two years ago tonight I was in jail. Without realizing what I was doing, I dressed, came to church.

Fifteen minutes later, he led his buddy to Christ. What he didn't know was that back home in the state of Michigan, all the Wesleyan churches had fasting and prayer that night in lieu of a Sunday night service for the salvation of that dear boy. An impossible situation, but possible with God.

You've got a loved one like that, just keep him before the Lord. How about in the Christian life? Got a burden there of some loved one that's not walking with God's save? Yes, knows the Savior, but somebody a special burden? We had just such a case in one of our churches in Birmingham. Some folks here tonight remember them well.

This couple had come to southeastern to Birmingham to go to Bible college to train, but they got a good job with a lot of money and never got to Bible college. And he was the song leader in the church and he taught an adult class. And then all of a sudden he stopped everything.

Wouldn't come to church. I'm through with the whole business. This dear wife was brokenhearted.

She got everybody and his brother to pray and to pray and pray and finally after a year, the dear husband came back to the morning worship service. We kept praying. One day that husband was in his normal business pattern and he thought he had a heart attack.

Pulled over to the side of the road and he said, I've got to get to a hospital. So he started the car up again and headed for the hospital and there was a train right in front of him and there he was jammed between cars and couldn't move. God spoke to him.

He said, Lord, I confess, I repent and got right with God. Sitting there thinking he was dying and God simply dealt with his heart in that way like the surprises of the book of Joshua and God gave him the victory. Got a problem in Christian service? I was in a meeting in Indiana some months ago and at the close of the service the dear organist came up to me.

He had emphasized soul winning. The dear lady said, a wonderful Christian lady, she said, Brother Gannett, I do love the Lord and I do love to serve him, but I just can't talk to somebody about Jesus Christ. I said, my dear lady, God has grace for that.

Yes, he does. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I tried to encourage her heart.

One day I was in a meeting in Kansas City and at the close of the meeting a lady came up to me and talked about her son. Oh, wicked boy, not walking with God at all. And she said, oh, Brother Gannett, what can I do? And she poured out her heart to me and she paused for me to reply and encourage her heart.

And a dear white haired lady standing beside me said, Brother Gannett, may I respond to this dear lady? I said, yes, ma'am. She said, dear mother, we used to have a boy like that and we just daily kept him before the Lord and didn't give God a choice. What's your problem tonight? What's your burden tonight? After Jericho, after AI, after the Southern campaign, after the Northern campaign, just turn it over to God according to your faith.

Be it unto you all. May we pray. And before we pray, oh, every one of us here tonight has in our experience these humanly impossible situations.

Oh, dear fellow Christian, let's let the word of the Lord encourage us tonight. In all these chapters we read, the Lord gave the victory. And will you tonight turn that boy, turn that husband, turn that wife, turn that

physical problem, that financial need, that one not saved, whatever the need is, and let's ask God to move the mountain and let's believe God for that dear one tonight until he answers.

Oh, God our Father, give us grace to do thy work thy way. Give us grace tonight, Lord, to believe thee. Give us grace to rest in thee.

Give us grace to rejoice in thee tonight. As we wait upon the Lord, as we're of good courage, as thou dost strengthen our hearts. Oh, our Father, thou hast said they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

We wait upon thee tonight to give us the victory. We claim it in our Savior's name. Amen.

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