

DON'T BE SATISFIED!

TEXT: *Joshua 18:3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?*

THESIS: To illustrate the principles which spell success & those which lead to failure.

INTRO.: A. Israel had miraculously crossed the Red Sea (a picture of salvation) & after 40 years in the wilderness of Sin (!), they have now crossed over Jordan (a picture of the Spirit-filled life). But Joshua's statement in our text is an indictment against their complacency & slackness. No longer meeting w/any open opposition, they had settled down to rest, though more than ½ of the nation had not obtained their inheritance.

B. How like those today in the church who think that because they are on the safe side of salvation & have entered into a portion of the blessings of God can now sit back & relax.

TRANS.: There are 3 positions represented w/in the nation of Israel whose posterity are in the church today...

I. NINE & ONE HALF TRIBES CROSSED JORDAN BUT FAILED TO CLAIM THEIR POSSESSIONS:

NOTE: God commanded to divide the land even before it was conquered! They were to claim their possessions by faith! Joshua had now brought them safely across Jordan & had routed the ruling powers, captured their forts & subdued the Canaanites so that Israel had a firm foothold in the Promised Land, but there was much left for the people to do; enemies to be dealt with, land to be conquered, and the occupants dispossessed.

A. When You Cross Over - The Battle Begins!

1. The lethargic, lazy believer who is on the safe side of the Red Sea (salvation) but is still wandering in the wilderness of Sin, has little conflict - but also little victory!

ILLUS.: While Israel was in the wilderness they had little conflict from their enemies - as long as they stayed close to the center of the camp & the Tabernacle w/its pillar of cloud & fire. They had protection from the heat by day, warmth by night, manna every morning, water out of the rock, shoes & clothing that didn't wear out, etc. But they had to live in tents, wander in circles, & had little motivation & no taste of the "*milk & honey*" of the Promised Land & that whole generation died in the desert!!!

2. On the other side of the Jordan (the Spirit-filled life), the enemies lurk & are lodged there & will not give up their homes & pastures & gardens & wealth w/out a fight!

ILLUS.: Once the believer makes the decision to live for the Lord & please Him & possess his possessions, he declares war on the world, the flesh & the devil & he will be in a continual state of conflict w/them & w/his old nature which loved the peaceful life in the wilderness, where God did everything & provided for his or her needs w/out conflict.

B. When You Cross Over - You Declare War!

1. Warfare is never fun!
2. The preacher who crosses Jordan will never know what peace in the church is.

ILLUS.: There will be those who misunderstand & misinterpret your motives. They are more concerned w/profit than people. They are more interested in the treasurer's report than in the soul-winning report. They think it is a waste of money to give candy to bus kids & prizes to those who bring visitors or to give awards to those who work the hardest. They are more interested in cash than Christ. They are more interested in themselves than in others. "*Boy preacher, we know that people got saved, but it cost so much!*" How much is a soul worth? How much would you want us to spend if it was your soul? Or if it was your kid who was headed for hell?

3. The Christian who crosses Jordan will never know what peace in his life is.

ILLUS.: To cross over into the Spirit-filled life costs! You may have to change your lifestyle: your entertainment, your wardrobe, your vocabulary. You may have to give up your bowling night to go soul-winning, you may have to quit your hunting & fishing on Saturday to visit your bus route. You may have to give up softball to work with boys & girls. You may have to give up renting Hollywood movie videos to study God's Word for your Sun. Schl. class. *You will never get enough rest - but that's what heaven is for!!!!*

4. The Church which crosses Jordan will never know what peace is.

ILLUS.: There will never be enough money. There will never be an end to building. There will never be enough workers.

II. TWO & ONE HALF TRIBES DIDN'T WANT TO CROSS JORDAN: Num.32:1,2,5-7 (Look it up!)

A. Your Decision May Discourage Others:

1. If you decide not to cross over Jordan, others may be discouraged. **v.7,8**

ILLUS.: Moses reminds Reuben & Gad of the spies report at Kadesh-Barnea & what it cost the nation...40 years of wilderness wandering and that their decision would no doubt cause others to want to quit & not go to battle. (To their credit, they vowed to fight alongside their brethren till Canaan was conquered, & they did.) Later, 1/2 of the tribe of Manasseh joined in their defection.

2. Other Christians who look up to you may fall if you fail.
3. Your children will never serve the Lord if you decide to drop out of the bus ministry, don't go soul-winning, never teach a S.S. class, refuse to get involved in the children's church program, kid's clubs, etc.

B. Your Decision May Affect Others: Joshua 22:9-12 (Look it up!)

1. The motives of the 2 1/2 tribes was good, they wanted to erect an altar of memorial, but their method was faulty & almost triggered a civil war!
 - a. They had broken fellowship w/their brethren & so misunderstandings arose easily as to their motives.
 - b. They had left the land where the Ark of the Covenant & the Tabernacle were erected so they had been cut off from their religious obligations, thus their motives were misinterpreted when they built a great altar.

ILLUS.: Their stated motive was that they wanted a memorial for their children. **Josh.22:21-28 (Look it up!)**

2. Your spiritual decisions also affect your children & future generations of believers.
3. Slackness instead of success, cowardice instead of courage, fear instead of faith & weariness instead of steadfastness characterized the 9 1/2 tribes in possessing their possessions & selfishness & greed characterized the 2 1/2 tribes - their progeny are with us today!!!

III. CALEB CROSSED JORDAN BUT WANTED MORE: Josh.14:6-13 (Go ahead, look it up!)

A. Vision Leads to Victory:

1. Here is an 85 year old man who hasn't lost his vision.
2. He is not satisfied nor content w/the promised provision for the tribes, he wanted some-thing beyond the normal: **"give me this mountain...(with the) Anakims (GIANTS!) (and the) cities (which are) great & fenced..." v.12**

ILLUS.: Christians should never be satisfied with what others have done or are doing. God uses individuals, not groups! It has always been so: Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Samson, David, Paul & Peter - to name a few. But perhaps the greatest of all is this man Caleb, of whom it is recorded 6 times that he **"wholly followed the Lord!"** Oh, Lord, give us more Calebs!!!!

B. Promise Insures Protection:

1. Don't hesitate to do whatever you are sure God has led you to do - His promise insures your protection.

ILLUS.: Whether on the far-flung fields of the world or the field at your doorstep, He will protect you if you simply, humbly & obediently claim His promises.

2. Like Caleb, when you claim the promises you will have his protection & possess your possessions!

C. Consecration Brings Conquest: v.13.14

1. God doesn't give any details *how the victory was won, the giants overcome, the walled cities knocked down or breached, how the fences were destroyed or the mountain scaled.*
2. The Script. simply says: **"...and Joshua gave Caleb...Hebron for an inheritance...(and) Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb..."**

ILLUS.: Don't ask "How?" simply trust God to give you the victory you long for & possess the promised possessions He delights in giving to those who **"wholly follow"**Him.

CONCL.: Don't be like the 9 1/2 tribes who failed to have the victory, nor the 2 1/2 tribes whose interests were primarily selfish. Instead be like Caleb & **"DON'T BE SATISFIED"** with the status quo or mediocre Christianity. Pursue victory in spite of obstacles or giants & then in faith praise God for your growth & blessings.