

Significant Lessons From The Seemingly Insignificant

#10 Be Diligent To Enter God's Rest

The Israelites did not walk by faith, did not expect God to act, to give them victory over ALL their enemies and give them their inheritance. [LAND = type of abundant life]

Therefore, God caused them to wander in the wilderness for 38 more years.

God ultimately brought them to the Jordan River for entrance into their inheritance.

It was spring and the time of the barley harvest. The Jordan was at flood stage; ~3/4 mi. wide instead of 20 to 60 yards. Crossing the Jordan River will require their surrender to God's will.

1. Joshua had them camp and observe the flooded Jordan for 3 days. [Josh. 3:1-2]

2. This huge obstacle bars their entrance to their inheritance; land; rest

3. Crossing the Jordan represents death. Death to all my natural abilities and resources

a. Must learn this truth or there will be no spiritual progress

4. Renounce: My self-reliance; my self-will; my self-confidence; my wisdom

5. All attempts to extricate myself from my circumstances is FUTILE.

Consider: Have I counted the cost? Am I willing to die to self? Not for double-minded!

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me:

and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

The land of Canaan is nothing less than the believer's enjoyment, on earth, of the resurrection life of Jesus Christ.

God told Joshua: Joshua 1:3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread [darak = do warfare] upon, that have I given unto you.

Josh. 5b "As I was with Moses [in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt], so I will be with you [in bringing them into Canaan]

Josh. 1:9 Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with you whithersoever you go.

Principle Jesus Demonstrated: He that sent me is with me: the Father has not left me alone.

For I always do those things that please Him. "The One who told me to is with me." [John 8:29]

All spiritual activity: Why: God told me to. How: The God who told me to is with me.

When Joshua sent in the 2 spies, they made an amazing discovery from Rahab.

Joshua 2:9-11 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side

Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. ¹¹ And as soon as we had heard these things,

our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you:

for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

The spies learned:

1. For 40 years the inhabitants of their inheritance [Canaan] had been a defeated foe.
2. They had conceded victory to Israel from the day they had heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for them when they were delivered from Egypt.
3. Their hearts had melted and there was no more courage in any of them.
4. They were convinced the God of Israel was God in heaven above and in earth beneath.
5. The God of Israel was as competent to get His people in their inheritance [land] as He was competent to get His people out of bondage.
6. What amazed the inhabitants of Canaan?

It took Israel so long to take and claim what God had promised and had given?

7. The 2 spies discovered that for 40 years in the wilderness, Israel had been fighting a battle already lost, instead of enjoying their land of milk and honey [abundant life], a victory already won!

Application: This is the discovery we make when we return to walking by faith. We discover:

We have been defrauding ourselves - maybe 10, 20, 30, 40 years - of a victory that Christ won over 1900 years ago when He rose again from the dead that he might live His life in us.

8. The spies hurried to tell Joshua the exciting news:

Josh. 2:24; 3:7 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

9. Joshua gathered the people to tell them of the new chapter in their lives.

Life will never be the same. Joshua's language of victory and his faith became infectious.

Josh. 3:5 Sanctify [consecrate] yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

Qadas = Consecration is the act of setting aside of oneself for use in the worship of God and in obeying God's words and commands. Reserving yourself exclusively for God's use

Josh. 3:10-11 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. ¹¹ Behold, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth passes over before you into Jordan.

Consider: You have been living for 40 years in the wilderness as though your God were dead, but you are going to live from now on knowing that God is alive in you.

Josh. 3:3-4 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. ⁴ Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it that ye may know the way by which ye must go:

for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

1. The ark represented God's covenant with them. What was inside the ark represented the spiritual content of their faith and God's purpose for their lives.
2. The ark was to go before them with a space between it and them.

- Keep back a space so they might know the way and follow it.
- Had they surrounded the ark, nobody would have known the way; nothing but confusion with "about 50 sub-committees all deliberating the issue."
- Give God room to maneuver in time and space.
- Learn to be still; to know He is God; You are not to panic!
- If you are solidly convinced that God is the arbiter of your affairs, you will never be anxious.

Ps. 37:5, 7a Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him.

Josh. 1:3, 5a Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life.

One step at a time; one day at a time. This is our daily walk.

Consider: Hurry at your own peril, "for you have not passed this way heretofore." [Josh. 3:4b] This will be a NEW experience.

Note: Some wilderness Christians get angry when you tell them about the indwelling life of the risen Lord Jesus Christ in all His sovereignty. They are greatly offended if you indicate they have never been this way before. "Do you mean to tell me that after 40 years I still don't know how to live the Christian life? Then they proceed to make another lap around Mt. Sinai. They try to make up in speed what they lack in direction."

Josh. 3:16c-17 and the people passed over right against Jericho. ¹⁷ And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

Question: How did they get through the Jordan River? They put their feet in the waters of Jordan and stood still. Why? God told them to! What happened? God divided the waters. They went through on dry land and entered their rest, inheritance. Why? God said they would!

Heb. 4:1-11 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, [G2663] let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard Did Not Profit Them, Not Being Mixed With Faith in those who heard it. [Take Heed: That You Hear; What You Hear; How You Hear]

For we who have believed do enter that rest, [G2663] as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,'" [G2663] although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴ For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way:

"And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"; [God's Sabbath Rest is a picture of our rest in Christ through Salvation.]

⁵ and again in this *place*: "If they shall enter into My rest." [G2663]

⁶ Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience [unbelief], ⁷ again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice,

Do not harden your hearts." ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.

⁹ There remains therefore a REST [G4520] for the people of God.

¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest [G2663] has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His. Let us therefore be diligent [labor] to enter that rest, [G2663] lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience [unbelief].

1. This passage does not refer to God's rest of initial salvation; justification.

2. He is addressing BELIEVERS who are already justified who need to enter the Rest of Sanctification. [Heb. 3:1]

3. They have the promise of entering into God's Rest. 2 different words for rest in Hebrews

a. He uses katapausis [G2663] the most: 8x in chapters 3 & 4.

Outside of Hebrews, this word is used only once in the NT. [Acts 14:18]

b. Katapausis = a cessation of activity = rest in the sense of ceasing

Cease from your OWN works and rely totally on

His work

c. LXX includes passages where the word for rest = katapausis, is in connection with Israel's possession of the land. It is clearly paralleled with the word for inheritance = kleronomia

The word for REST and INHERITANCE in the OT = synonyms

d. Moses clearly showed that for Israel their rest was their inheritance.

[Deut. 3:18-20; 12:9-11] Israelites forfeited their inheritance or their rest.

e. In Hebrews, the writer's term for "rest" is the equivalent of a Christian's inheritance.

Just like their ancestors at Kadesh-Barnea, the Jewish believers in Hebrews had a promise of God "of entering into His rest." [Heb. 4:1]

4. Fear that I will come short of it.

5. The Gospel must be mixed with faith for it to profit me. Walk by FAITH; not sight.

The Old Testament commandment to keep the Sabbath was meant to remind His people that God rested from His work when the creation was done. It's the only one of the 10 that's not specifically repeated in the New Testament. In Hebrews 4 we learn why.

Hebrews 4: For Christians: The OT Sabbath restriction against work represents our Life Long Rest from the work of salvation after accepting the Lord's death as payment for our sins.

Eph. 2:8-9 Paul asserts, For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

1. We are to rest from our own works! so that no one can boast. [Justification]

2. God never again took up the work of Creation.

Jesus never again took up the work of dying for our sins. It is finished.

3. When we accept His finished work, we enter into our Sabbath Rest [Jesus Christ].

4. You entered into a Life-Long Sabbath Rest. You are now a "new creation in Christ."

II Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Phil.1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

a. When you work in your own effort to please God, it shows you don't really believe His completed and continuing work in you is sufficient. You need to help finish the job.

b. Working to sanctify ourselves will result in "no spiritual growth."

- All believers [red apples] are given +100 commands in the NT.
- Changed into the image of Jesus Christ; Take up your cross and follow Me
- Die To Self; Mortify the deeds of the flesh
- Be an empty vessel for God's use; Humble yourself before Me
- Walk In The Spirit; Pursue Holiness; Be Clothed With The Humility Of Christ
- Be Filled with the Holy Spirit; Be Diligent To Enter God's Rest

What is the key to living a Transformed Life; Led by the Spirit; Resulting in Maturity?

c. As believers, we are to remember our "Sabbath Rest." [cease working for our salvation].

- For us the Sabbath rest is spiritual, not physical.

In Matt. 5:21-22, Jesus said just because we don't murder people doesn't mean we've kept the commandment. If we're angry with someone, it's just as bad as if we killed him.

In Matt. 5:27-28, Jesus said the same about adultery. Lustful thoughts are as bad as the act itself.

These are 2 examples He used to show that keeping the commandments is not a matter of outward behavior. It's the motivation of our heart that either commends or condemns us.

Consider: Just because a person is in church on a particular day, doesn't mean he's keeping the Sabbath commandment. One keeps the Sabbath commandment by Entering a Life Long Rest.

1. The Israelites would not enter God's Rest because they did not expect Him to act.

2. The issue was man's faith in God to work; to be faithful to do what He said.

3. Command: Be diligent to enter God's Rest. Not an absence of activity.

4. I rest by faith for God to work in me. I have no trust in my ability or strength.

Divine Genius: God does the work in me. I am saved from the futility of self-effort.

I am relieved of the burden of trying to pull myself up by my bootstraps.

I begin to live a supernatural life in the energy and power of God Himself.

I quit struggling to become what I already am. I MUST become totally dependent upon the life of Jesus Christ who lives within me.

Note: Therefore New Testament "believers" profane [treat with irreverence or disrespect] their Sabbath Rest by continuing to work to earn or keep their salvation.

The endless debate about Saturday vs. Sunday completely misses the point.

The Point: Have I rested from my own work and entered into my life-long Sabbath rest?

Remember: As you have thanked God for His death, thank Him for His life and count upon the FACT that He lives in you.

Truth: Col. 2:9-10a For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

¹⁰ And ye are complete in Him,

Paul's 4 steps: Know a truth; Reckon [count on]; Yield to Him; Thank Him

Remember: He does not give you strength. HE IS YOUR STRENGTH.
He does not give you victory. HE IS YOUR VICTORY.
He does not give you peace. HE IS YOUR PEACE.
Count on the FACTS! Stop asking for what is already yours in Christ!

D. The Sabbath Relates To Me Because It Is Related To Eternity

Ex. 31:16-17 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a Perpetual Covenant. ⁷ It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.

NOTE: Heb 4:9 Moved from Canaan rest to Sabbath rest - different Greek word: [see p. 4] Sabbatismos [Strong's G4520] only place used in entire NT: the blessed rest from toils and troubles looked for in the age to come by the true worshippers of God and true believers Refers not to a Sabbath day, but Sabbath observance/celebration (the creation of God, the heart of rest; not legalistic rule abiding)

1. Because this sabbatismos "rest" is the "rest" of God Himself, its full fruition is yet future, though believers now enter into it.
2. Sabbatismos is a sign of the future and perfect rest yet to come. Sign for eternity
3. Sabbath now gives a glimpse of eternity, our eternal rest in the Lord.
This rest can only be found in Him. God calls it: "My Rest"
4. It became a picture of a day when God's rest will be truly experienced forever by His redeemed creation.
5. Future Rest that all believers will enjoy with God: When we enter Heaven, it will be like sharing God's great Sabbath rest, with all labors and battles ended.

Josh. 5:10-11 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover [1st time since Mt. Sinai] on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. For the first time the people began to enjoy that for which they had been redeemed. Their salvation now made sense.

Josh. 5:13 And 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?

Joshua went out to draw up plans for tackling the 1st major task that confronted him - the walled city of Jericho. As he was surveying the problem, he became aware of a Man with His sword drawn in His hand. "Whose side are you on? Are you on ours or their side?"

Josh. 5:14a And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. I have not come to take sides - I have come to take over!

As we dwell in our Sabbath Rest, [the land] we do not make our plans and hope God will be on our side. Jericho [our problems] are no longer our problems. They are God's problem. I am to come under the supreme jurisdiction of the Man with the sword in His hand.

Josh. 5:14b-15 And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What says my Lord unto his servant? ¹⁵ And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place where you stand is holy. And Joshua did so. God doesn't take sides! He takes over!