

Joshua- Courage for Battle Don't Forget to Remember- Session #4 Small Group Notes

Introduction:

If you remember the 1984 Winter Olympics, there was the amazing game of the United States defeating the USSR in the hockey finals. Later this event was put into a movie called "Miracle" where the announcer of the game famously said, "Do you believe in miracles?" regarding the US victory.

While the victory was not a miracle per se, it was a truly amazing game of an underdog defeating a highly favorited team that was unexpected.

Has there been a time in your life where the Lord did a miraculous work that can only be explained by His power?

What has been your response in the past to blessings that the Lord has given you? Do you have something in your life to help you remember about that time?

In our discussion based on the sermon we are going to look at the times that the Israelites crossed the Jordan River into dry land and then God told them to do something amazing to help remember this mighty act that occurred. He told them to take stones and build two altars. In our lives, we can be quick to forget the mighty work of God in our lives if we aren't careful and yet there are times that we need to be reminded!

Discuss:

1. Stones of remembrance are the forgotten key to spiritual growth

- Read Joshua 4:1-3
- The greatest enemy of faith may be forgetfulness
- Remembering strengthens a relationship
- Remembering stirs our hearts towards greater obedience to Christ

Explain: Large stones were often used to build altars as monuments to the Lord. These altars were landmarks reminding all who passed of what had happened in that place. Sometimes the people would rename the place or make sacrifices because of the significant event. What the twelve men did here follows the same idea. Picking up twelve stones was representative of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. This was a significant event in the history of Israel, like the parting of the Red Sea, and needed to be remembered in a significant fashion.

Ask:

Read Genesis 12:7-8, 13:18, 28:18 and 35:7. What significance did these altars have in the story of God's plan?

How have you seen the enemy of our faith in forgetfulness try to be present in your life? How have you seen remembering as a way to grow spiritually through obedience and worship?

2. Stones of remembrance are a spiritual baton of our faith!

- Read Joshua 4:6-7
- When we fail to memorialize our faith our children trivialize theirs
- Stones of remembrance let children know that God's work didn't begin and end with them, Joshua 4:24
- Stones of remembrance are keys to transferring our faith to the world

Explain: The Israelites celebrated special occasions by remembering what the Lord had done for them in the past, such as the celebration of Passover. These were ways for the Lord to draw His chosen people closer to Himself. In their remembering, they worshiped the God who provided for them. This story was to be remembered in the same way.

Ask:

The Israelites were instructed to pass this story on to future generations. What were they to say, and why is it important? Why is it important for us to still do this today?

The Israelites were to remind one another of God's presence in their midst, and in so doing, spur one another on in faith. How do we spur each other on in faith within the church (Hebrews 10:24)?

Faith and hope are built upon remembrance of the past and expectation of the future. What stories do you remember from your life or others' lives about how the Lord has worked in powerful ways? How can these stories motivate us to put off the things of the world and put on Christ?

3. Stones of remembrance anchor us when our faith is tested!

- Read Joshua 4:8-10
- Stones of remembrance breed courage for the battle, Hebrews 13:7-8
- The stones of remembrance in the middle were a reminder to live by faith, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Explain: The Israelites obeyed what Joshua said, taking the stones as commanded from the river. The Ark still stood in the middle of the river, the presence of God still keeping the waters of the flooding Jordan at bay. Joshua also went into the Jordan River to build a separate monument of stones: a marker for where the Lord held back the water for His people.

Ask:

Consider the truth that those who believe in Christ are indwelt with the same presence of God that held back the waters in the Jordan River. How does that change the way you view God's power to work in your life? How does it give you courage?

How can we train ourselves to remember the works of the Lord? What are some ways that you or your family remember that could help others in the group?

How might this continual remembrance impact our daily lives and our efforts to share the gospel with others?