

Beautiful Things - Barriers

The things worth going after have barriers.

In every one of your lives there is something God is calling you to.

And barriers are a beautiful thing because they represent an opportunity for us to see God's hand at work.

Joshua 6:1

¹ Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. ² But the Lord said to Joshua, "I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors.

"You were created to be a conqueror of Kingdom Matters."

³ You and your fighting men should march around the town once a day for six days. ⁴ Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. ⁵ When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams' horns, have all the people shout as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town."

⁶ So Joshua called together the priests and said, "Take up the Ark of the Lords Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn."⁷ Then he gave orders to the people: "March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the Lord."

⁸ After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams' horns started marching in the presence of the Lord, blowing the horns as they marched. And the Ark of the Lords Covenant followed behind them.

⁹ Some of the armed men marched in front of the priests with the horns and some behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns.

¹⁰ "Do not shout; do not even talk," Joshua commanded. "Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!" ¹¹ So the Ark of the Lord was carried around the town once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp.

¹² Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the Lord. ¹³ The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the Lord, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the Lord. All this time the priests were blowing their horns. ¹⁴ On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days.

¹⁵ On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times. ¹⁶ The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the town!"

When we face barriers to kingdom matters God has called us to, we need to see God as a Barrier Breaker.

God uses barriers in our lives to remind us of his presence in the kingdom matters he has called us to conquer.

²⁰ When the people heard the sound of the rams' horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it.

To conquer barriers we need to see God's hand and we need to be ready to act and join with his presence.

So What?

Are you conquering kingdom matters with God? Or are you wandering in the desert?

Ice Cream Truck Theology

Are you living for temporary satisfaction or for kingdom matters?

Today's Scripture is from the New Living Translation
Kirk Proctor, January 7 & 8, 2012

Want to hear this again?

The sermon is posted on the church web site by Monday evening.

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Now What? Resources for Reflection & Growth

God is creating something beautiful out of your life and the great thing is that he is inviting you to be a part of it. But fear will keep your life like a blank slate. When you encounter barriers, does fear of them well up inside of you or do you see barriers as opportunities?

Can you think of an example of a time you knew God was calling you to do something, to be a conqueror of kingdom matters and there were barriers? How did you respond? What was the result?

In the sermon this weekend Kirk said that God is calling every one of us to something. God wants us to be conquerors of kingdom matters. But many of you are wondering, how do I know what my "something" is? There are a few ways to find this out. First, read Joshua 6:2 – who is Joshua speaking to?

The first step is to speak to the Lord – we need to ask him to reveal to us what should we be doing. Take a few minutes and pray and ask the Lord to reveal this to you.

Now read Joshua 6:20. After the walls fell down, was the battle over? They still had to go into the city and take on the strong warriors of Jericho. Every man CHARGED. God was saying the moment I answer your prayer and do the supernatural, the thing you couldn't have done or imagined happening, the moment I break down the barrier, you ACT. These men exhausted themselves in battle, they got hurt, blood was spilled but at the end of the day they possessed the land because they were infused by God's power for God's purpose and they ASKED and then ACTED. So, even after they prayed and God told them I have given you this city, they still had to ACT.

So, two steps, we have to ASK and then we have ACT. A lot of us are better at one of these than the other and then really struggle with the other one.

Some of us are great prayer warriors. We pray for God to give us an opportunity to share our faith, but then when the opportunity comes we doubt whether that really was an opportunity and we fail to Act. We become so focused on the ask and the spiritual that we forget to actually act. Do you pray for the AIDS situation in Zambia but never do anything to sacrificially act? Do you pray for your friends, but forget to minister to them? You are better at the Ask, but struggle with the Act

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And some of us are great with the Act. We are trying to do things for God all the time, but we have never stopped to Ask if we are doing the right things – the things God wants us to be doing. You are so action oriented that you don't stop and ask God? You just act thinking you will let it sort itself out later, and you say, "but at least I am taking action?"

So, which one of those are you better at? Which of those two is the hardest for you? How can you get better at the one you struggle with? What forms of accountability can you build into your life to help you improve with this?

All right now, we still haven't gotten to how to know what I am supposed to do once I Ask and prepare myself to Act. Well, start by asking yourself these two questions – what makes me miserable? What gets me upset? I don't mean things like, "It really upsets me when men wear Capri pants". But things like, I don't like when I see children being taught poorly, or broken families break my heart, or it really bothers me when widows or orphans or the poor aren't cared for, or my heart burns to see people understand scripture better, or I always feel the need to share gospel more. Those "feelings" are most likely from the Lord and might reveal where you should be conquering for the Lord. So take a few minutes to think about this and then share your answers. In a small group, you could even ask the group to help you if you are struggling with what it might be for you – they might know you better than you realize.

As you gather answers remember the artwork – you don't have to start with knowing exactly what you will do. But to create a masterpiece, you have to start creating something. And as you go you can figure out later the "best" answer or what the masterpiece God has called you to will be.

Now, help each other in your group know what their next steps are to beginning to be a conqueror of the kingdom matters God has called them to. Will you commit to check up on one another see how you are each doing?