

Mid-Week Devotion



Empowered

Read Joshua 6:1-5 “...all the people shall shout...”

Moses was dead and God had appointed a new leader over the Hebrews; his name was Joshua. It would be Joshua’s job to lead the Hebrew nation into the Promised Land, conquering its inhabitants and delivering the land that God had promised. One day God tells Joshua that He is going to deliver the city of Jericho into the people’s hands. However, the manner in which the victory would be won was both unexpected and rather unorthodox.

As a pastor, I have the privilege of being invited into people’s lives; their joys, concerns, their secrets, and even the messes they seem to get themselves into. Often I hear things like, “why do I have to go through this,” or “why doesn’t God just make it stop hurting or simply make it go away?” All too often, I hear, “I have been praying for so long for God to make it go away, it is as if He isn’t listening.” It is true that there is nothing beyond God’s power, after all God simply spoke all there is into existence; so when it comes to our little problems, fixing them should be a piece of cake. Yet it has been my experience that God doesn’t simply remove our problems, instead He takes a different approach.

Joshua is instructed to take all the soldiers and march around the great walls of the city of Jericho for six days. Then on the seventh day, together with seven priests and the Ark, they are instructed to march around the city seven times, and then blow the trumpets. Finally, when the people hear the trumpets they are all to shout with a great shout; then and only then, the great walls of the city come falling down.

Yes, God could have simply said the word and the walls of Jericho would have fallen, but God had a better way, He would achieve His victory through empowering His people, and by doing so strengthen the people’s faith as well as be glorified. This approach can sometimes be difficult for us to understand, especially when we are facing a huge problem in our life. Nonetheless, it would seem that God is much more interested in changing us than He is in changing our situations. Instead of making our problems go away, He equips, changes, and provides ways for us to rise up and overcome our problems. In this way, we become stronger; stronger in our faith, stronger in our resolve, and stronger in our relationship with the Savior. In other words, He empowers us to become bigger than our problems.

I remember a time in my life when I was facing a big problem. I prayed and prayed asking God to fix the problem. God answered my prayer not by fixing the problem but rather by fixing me! While you and I see our problems as hurdles stopping us from going or doing what we want, God sees them as opportunities to bless us. As unexpected and sometimes unorthodox as His methods may appear, the Savior will always choose to focus on fixing us rather than fixing our problems. This is because He loves us more than the hurdles we face.

Therefore, may you face the problems of the day not by asking God to remove them, but rather by asking God to empower you in a way that will allow you to overcome them.

Dear Jesus, may you create in me the solution to my problems, that I may be saved and You glorified. Amen.