“Going in Circles” Joshua 6:1-17

Do you ever feel like your Christian life is going in circles?
Never really making any progress - spiritually - plateau - not reaching full potential.

**Purpose Statement:** To encourage and inspire believers to be more fully engaged in the pursuit of obtaining God’s promises.

**KEY THEME: Unclaimed Freight store:** In this room is good Christians that have not claimed their promises and taken hold of them.

1. Hoagie from the movie “Labyrinth.” Yes. Someone checked the original puppet.
2. A Gucci suitcase filled with ancient Egyptian artifacts.
4. A $250,000 guidance system belonging to the U.S. Navy.
6. A suit of armor. Stupid TSA probably wouldn’t let the owner wear it in the cabin during the flight, as planned.
7. A 300-year-old violin. Has Dave Carroll taught us nothing? Don’t check your valuable musical instruments!
8. An ordinary-looking sock, which contained a 5.8-carat diamond set in a platinum ring.
9. A camera designed for the Space Shuttle. NASA fly’s commercial?
10. A 40.95-carat natural emerald.

California alone has 6.1 Billion dollars unclaimed! Wow!
I wonder what causes people to not claim their stuff. Fear, laziness, lost hope.

Excavations of Jericho show it was only about 8 Acres square and was surrounded by 2 high walls about 15 ft. apart.
(That’s why the 10 spies said it was impossible)

*Warren Wiersbe writes:*
Nothing paralyzes our lives like the attitude that things can never change. We need to remind ourselves that God can change things. Outlook determines outcome. If we see only the problems, we will be defeated; but if we see the possibilities in the problems, we can have victory.

**Reason’s people stop short of God’s promise for their lives.**

1. Your perspective get’s blocked

Moses to Joshua - God’s promises where given, but here stood a huge barrier between the promise and the people.

6 Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.

* City was on lock down.

* Thus the problem to possess the promise was the wall. Wall seemed impossible to penetrate - How many know impossible situations are not intimidating to God.

* The sign that something is tied up or walled in your life, may not be the sign that you’re not going to get in or breakthrough- but a sign that the enemy can’t keep you out! (The gates of hell will not prevail against you) Matt. 16:18 Not just for Peter!

* The reason the city was on lock down- was they had heard of the Israelites God and what He had done.

* Some of the things that have us scared are really a sign that the enemy is scared of you!

* Ex. Stand up to Mt. Lion-

2 And the Lord said to Joshua: “See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.

* Funny how God is speaking in past tense. The city, king and mighty men.

* Problem with Vs. 2 was Vs 1 - “It’s a huge wall”

* Q- What do you do when what you see doesn’t look like anything God said.

    * Preacher is teaching about love, joy and peace.
(You are experiencing anything but those)

* Your spouse is not a believer- You've applied for 100 jobs- how long must I be single- how will I pay my rent this month- ????
* Jericho was not a big city, but was well defended.
* Historians said there were only 5 ways to penetrate a city like this. Israelites did none of them.
* God's ways have nothing to do with man's ways or strategy.
* Sometimes we are so caught up on all of our clever plans and leave no room for the super natural.
* When is the last time God's super natural power was at work in your life.
* Sometimes in order to be victorious- you have to do something that looks ridiculous. (Risk for Jesus)
* Perspective gets blocked- lift up your eyes in praise to see over the wall. Prayer/Worship

* I don't automatically posses it- because it was promised. Enemy puts up walls, obstacles to block perspective.

  * Walls like: you can't - will never - you're not qualified -you won't ever accomplish anything.

**T.D. Jakes**

You cannot have victory without conflict.

Victorious Christians are not most gifted, talented etc. Just the most surrendered.

"26 Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

*Victorious Christians are people who know the promises of God; because they spend time meditating on God’s Word (1:8) The Word did not leave their mouths.
* They believe the promises of God, because the Word of God generates faith in their hearts (Rom. 10:17); and they reckon on these promises and obey what God tells them to do. To “reckon” means to count as true in your life what God says about you in His Word.

1st problem - Perspectives get blocked

2nd problem - Progress is not always obvious

3 You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days.

* God calls a meeting with Joshua to talk about strategy - God’s not man’s

* Then & when for 6 days - nothing happens.

* If you want me to keep walking - God show me something. A small brick fall down or something. (We often need to see some results so we don’t give up. A marker - Working out…)

* Josh, send the people to march for 6 days and nothing will happen.

* Isn’t that the way it feels sometimes -
  - We decide to raise our kid’s up - Nothing is happening
  - get our finances in order
  - work on our marriages
  - Pray for healing, salvation - still nothing
  - Pray for addictions to go away
  - Car breaks down and things seem to get worse not better

* Walk by faith not sight - Walk it out!

* 6 is number of beast and man - some say iPhone is but have not come out with iPhone 6 yet.
  - Will you walk it out and forgive others when nothing happens
  - Will you continue to give when nothing
  - Will you keep loving, serving, reaching out - walk it out - take another Lap! You could be on 6 and victory is coming up.

* Take another Lap - even when you don’t see anything - No bricks falling.
* Not like astroids or centipede game- Rows do not disappear. 1 hour to walk around Jericho.

* Maybe God doesn’t want to give you a sign that its working- because there’s a deeper sign he wants to show you it’s working in you first!

* Maybe He wants you to be less focused on the outcome and more focused on obedience

*Life lesson- Outcome is God’s responsibility, Obedience is yours*

4 And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times and the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5 It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

* Josh calls the men that where to walk this out to give instructions.

6 Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the Ark of the Covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord.” 7 And he said to the people, “Proceed, and march around the city, and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the Lord.”

8 So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the Lord advanced and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. 9 The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets. 10 Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, “You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, ‘Shout!’ Then you shall shout.”

* Notice Josh - did not tell them how many times to walk around.
  - Imagine being a soldier’s wife. How was work today?
  - Just getting some practice drills- Pre- season
  - Heb. 6:1-15 “faith and patience go hand and hand- cannot have one without the other.
  - Want great faith- got to have great patience!


* God’s way is not our way- 1 Cor. 1:26-31 God uses foolish things, ways and people to get the Glory and victory.

* “God does not call the qualified, but qualifies the called.”

* Josh tells them to keep their mouths shut until the time comes.

* Maybe if they started talking, they would talk themselves out of it.
"If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his
tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless.” James 1:26

3rd- Process is open ended

11 So he had the ark of the Lord circle the city, going around it once. Then they came into the camp and lodged in the camp.
  12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. 13 Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard came after the ark of the Lord, while the priests continued blowing the trumpets. 14 And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days.
  15 But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. 16 And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets that Joshua said to the people: “Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!

  * How many laps left? We ask.
  * Mile markers- Life doesn’t give you mile markers or how much longer only obstacles and more walls, trials.
  * Woman with the issue of blood- How long Lord? 12 years

43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. 45 And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?”
  When all denied it, Peter and those with him[a] said, “Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”[b]
  46 But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.” 47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.
  48 And He said to her, “Daughter, be of good cheer;[c] your faith has made you well. Go in peace.” Luke 8:43-48

  * They had the ark- representation of Jesus. The best mile marker ever.

3 ‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”[Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV)
• When you keep struggling with life’s issues, sin- keep walking, take another Lap- victory is around the corner.
• NBA has 2 minute warning, Boxing has last round, and NASCAR has white flag for last lap.
• Problem is we wave our white flag of surrender too soon and give up.
This message is for someone who feels like they’re going in circles in their life.

• Your walking but wondering how many more laps- how much longer do I have to walk around these walls. Nothing is happening…
• Can’t go under them or over them or blow them up.
• How much longer do I need to be?
   - Pure
   - Single and lonely
   - be in this miserable marriage
   - Pray for healing
• We will give up when we walk in our own strength

Why couldn’t God just knock the walls down after the 1st round?

Maybe because if He did it the 1st round, we would take credit for it and not recognize the lessons behind the promises, like patience, faith, trust etc…

  * Perceive to receive the promise of God.
  * Heb. 10:35 When you have done the will of God.
  * “[He has to prepare me for what he has prepared - for me”
  * It’s in circling the walls in life that prepares me for the battle inside the walls when they come falling down

Warnings to follow:
  They obeyed every detail - Their obedience brought victory- sometimes we obey before the battle, but like Achan disobey after the victory.

There could be no victory in public unless we experience worship of the Lord in private. Josh fell on his face, took his shoes off in humility, turned his plans over to Jesus. “What does my master say to do?”

1-Complete obedience is crucial for complete victory!
  * Complete Obedience not partial- or partial victory will be had.
14 Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and
said, “O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!” 15 And Elisha said to him, “Take a bow and some arrows.” So he took himself a bow and some arrows. 16 Then he said to the king of Israel, “Put your hand on the bow.” So he put his hand on it, and Elisha put his hands on the king’s hands. 17 And he said, “Open the east window”; and he opened it. Then Elisha said, “Shoot!”; and he shot. And he said, “The arrow of the Lord’s deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them.” 18 Then he said, “Take the arrows”; so he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, “Strike the ground”; so he struck three times, and stopped. 19 And the man of God was angry with him, and said, “You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it! But now you will strike Syria only three times.” 2 Kings 13:14-19

* Act like every lap is your last lap and one day you’ll be right.

2- Not with human wisdom but with God’s power!

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 1 Cor. 2:2-5

3- Rely on God even when you don’t feel like it!

8 We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. 9 In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. 10 And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. 2 Cor. 1:8-10 NLT