

Courageous Holiness for Tomorrow

(Joshua 6:26-27)

Courageous Holiness (Recap) [Josh 6:17-25]

1. [Series] “Strong and Courageous”: How God’s people live out courageous faith in God’s presence, for God’s purpose, according to God’s promise.
2. [Josh 1-5] Courageous Preparation: Will God’s people genuinely trust & obey Him before engaging battles for His purposes?
3. [Josh 6:17-21] Courageous Holiness: **Courageous faith cleanses all idolatry from our midst.**
 - a. Jericho and all that was in it were “devoted to the Lord for destruction.”
 - i. Animals, crops & people were “devoted to the Lord for destruction” to be set apart to holy God for judgment, and to keep His people’s hearts & hands clean of idolatry (cf. Lev 27:28-29).
 - ii. Idolatry is adultery against a completely faithful, loving, committed God (cf. Hos 2), by pouring your devotion & attention to someone or something else other than Him, as if more valuable & glorious.
 - iii. We were created for relationship with God to give Him glory & us joy, because when He is most glorified, we are most satisfied.
 - b. [6:18] When we bring idolatry home, its destructive consequences not only destroy us, but also everyone around us.
 - c. [6:19] Some idols, God commands us to get rid of. Other idols, we can’t destroy on our own, so we give it to God to rid it out of our lives.
 - d. God’s grace in judgment: Jericho’s Canaanite/Amorite culture experienced God’s patience, given 600 years to repent of their idolatry & depravity, yet only grew progressively worse (cf. Gen 15:16; Lev 18:21; Deut 9:5).
 - e. *Applications:*
 - i. New Testament believers fight the spiritual forces of idolatry, not by putting people to the sword, but by contending against spiritual evil with the sword of the Spirit (the Word of God) and prayer (Eph 6:12, 6:17-18) to destroy the spiritual strongholds & Jericho’s of idolatry (2 Cor 10:3-5), its lies & effects (over-promising & under-delivering), through the truth & power of God.
 - ii. How have you brought home the idols of your culture? What idols do you need to cleanse from your heart & life, home & relationships, in your work or school?
 - iii. Of the idolatry you can’t get rid of, will you give it to God, and ask & allow Him to take it away?
4. [Josh 6:22-25] **Courageous faith repents of idolatry to be saved by God.**
 - a. In contrast to the idolaters of Jericho who are condemned to judgment, Rahab is saved to life.
 - i. She acted on faith to trust, obey & fear God over her culture & cultural identity.
 - ii. This prostitute & her family’s continuing presence among the Israelites show us how God forgives, saves & accepts anyone who turns back from idols to worship Him.
 - b. *Applications:*
 - i. Repent of our rebellious, adulterous idolatry by turning from it to Jesus, who suffered & paid for the judgment we (& Jericho) deserved.
 - ii. Repent of our idolatry of judgmental self-righteousness in how we’ve not welcomed “Rahabs” in our church & lives, when they are fully forgiven & accepted by Jesus and His people.

Courageous Holiness for Tomorrow [Josh 6:26-27]

1. God gives Joshua street cred as His chosen leader for the Israelites to succeed Moses
 - a. Joshua uses his God-given authority to issue a command & a promise.
 - i. The command: The wicked, idolatrous city of Jericho may never be rebuilt.
 - ii. The promise: So you’ll know this is God’s will, if anyone tries to rebuild, the consequence of such defiant, disobedient sin is the cost of your oldest and/or youngest son’s life.

- b. Can you live in the land, build homes, farm fields, and raise families? Yes. May you defy God by rebooting a city proudly dedicated to the worship of idols, pagan lifestyles, and the self-worship of human strength & ingenuity by rebuilding & fortifying the walls of Jericho with a new foundation & new gates? No.
2. To demonstrate how serious God is about demolishing any influence of Jericho's idolatry from God's people, 400-500 years later, during the reign of wicked King Ahab, the nation of Israel indeed turned away from God to Canaanite idol worship, forgot their holy God, and ceased trusting His promises or obeying His purposes.
 - a. An Israelite named Hiel rebuilt on the ruins of Jericho, leading to his firstborn and youngest sons' deaths, demonstrating the reality of the ongoing consequences (1 Kings 16:34).
3. After Jesus has won our battle, **courageous faith commits to not rebuild on the ruins of our past idolatry.**
 - a. Whenever we rebuild on idolatry's ruins, we're like a relapsing alcoholic, addict or porn user. Once we were slaves; that idol was our master. But being set free by Jesus for a while, we begin to wonder: What if I return to those ruins... enjoy just one drink, one hit, one video... it won't hurt to rebuild just this one time?
4. *Application:* God cautions us about the future. Once we obey Jesus' call to ruthlessly cleanse idolatry out of our lives; after He's rescued us by taking that resistant gold or silver, desire or relationship, out of our hands & hearts, don't be lulled into believing it no longer affects you or harms you.
 - a. Don't defy Him; don't rebuild there; the destructive consequences do not go away.

Cleanse Your Life [Challenge]

1. As you fight the spiritual battles to "take the land" of your heart & life and the people & places you influence for God's purposes, practice our stage 2 experiment.
2. For 40 days, discover and practice next steps to live out courageous faith expressed in courageous holiness & obedience for God's purposes, according to God's promises.
3. This week:
 - a. Prayerfully ask Jesus to reveal what idols you've adopted or rebuilt, instead of cleansed from your heart & life.
 - b. Spend time in prayer to repent of them, and turn back to Jesus.
 - c. In the world around you: What idols are prevalent at school or work, in your home or neighborhood? Combat & cleanse them with truth from the Word of God and prayer (Eph 6:12, 6:17-18; 2 Cor 10:3-5).
4. <http://thecrossing.cfcchayward.org/cleanseyourlife.html>