

**SERIES: The Mind of Christ
Overcoming Obstacles
Joshua 6:1 – 5**

Big Idea – The mind of Christ enables me to face and overcome obstacles.

Scripture verses: Jeremiah 32:27; Isaiah 64:4; Joshua 1:2-9; 5:1, 13-15

Last week we taught about the benefits of a Christ-like attitude. Have you encountered an obstacle in your life lately? Everyone runs into a difficult challenge every now and then which can ruin your attitude if you let it. Some people become discouraged, hang their heads, and never realize that this is a blessing from God.

The truth is that God gives us strategies to deal with every obstacle we face. Joshua 6:1-5 helps us understand God's plan for handling difficult times by following the principles of this Scripture passage. Summary: God's people, the Israelites, faced the obstacle of Jericho, a fortified city. God said, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors" (Joshua 6:1). He promised that the city would fall flat

1. Everyone faces obstacles that seem insurmountable.

We may face health issues that present obstacles, financial difficulties in purchasing a home, or challenges to provide an education for our children. Every area of life, at some time, will present problems that make it seem impossible for us to reach our goals. It is easy to become discouraged and simply give up.

However, God's promises are very clear and very personal. When we know that a goal is part of His will, we can also know there is a way to achieve it.

2. Every obstacle we face is subject to the power of God.

Sometimes we look upon our obstacles and wonder when God will take action and give us the victory. We can remember this one awesome truth: that no challenge is greater than His power. No matter how great the problem may be, God is greater still. He has said,

"Oh, Lord GOD, you made the skies and the earth with your very great power. There is nothing too hard for you to do.

"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?"
Jeremiah 32:17, 27

3. We become discouraged about obstacles because:

1. we focus on the obstacle rather than on God. The longer we pay attention to a problem, the greater the problem seems. Only when our minds are set on God and His awesome power do we see the problem in its true perspective.

2. we focus on our own resources rather than those of God. Our goal seems impossible because we know our own limitations. Almighty God has no limitations, and His resources are infinite.

3. we focus on the obstruction rather than the opportunity. In the light of God's perfect plan, every crisis is a new chance to glorify God.

4. God is at work in our obstacles even when we don't see it.

Isaiah 64:4 "For since the world began, no ear has heard, and no eye has seen a God like you, who works for those who wait for him!"

It is always a mistake when we believe that God is not working. All the time His hand is moving, accomplishing His will on His schedule. The mature believer knows that it is enough to trust God to take care of our problems; we don't have to see all that He does. He works deliberately, lovingly, and carefully to carry out His purposes in life.

Isaiah 64:4 contains God's promise that He "acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him." One of the wisest things we can do is to learn the principle of waiting upon the Lord.

5. God often requires some preparation on our part.

Joshua 5 describes the preparations that God commanded Israel to take before attacking Jericho. Sometimes He wants us to be obedient in some area. We need to hear from God and discover what He wants us to do.

Sometimes He wants us to repent of some sin. There may be something in your life that you need to let God cleanse before He will remove the obstacle. Sometimes He wants to demonstrate His presence in some fashion. Like Joshua, we must learn to meditate so we can experience the miraculous presence of God.

6. God will give us assurance of the removal of these obstacles.

Isaiah 43:1 "...the LORD says...Fear not because I have saved you. I have called you by name, and you are mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. When you cross rivers, you will not drown. When you walk through fire, you will not be burned, nor will the flames hurt you."

God assures us by speaking to our hearts. One of the primary works of the Holy Spirit is to reveal the will of the Father. The Spirit lives within us and guides us to walk in God's will. Sometimes God will make His will crystal clear, while other times He will provide a little direction, gradually strengthening that guidance until we know His path. He tells us to take a step in a certain direction, then He waits for our obedience.

7. God will give us very clear direction.

Joshua 6:3 March around the city with your army once a day for six days.

4 Have seven priests carry trumpets made from horns of male sheep and have them march in front of the Ark. On the seventh day march around the city seven times and have the priests blow the trumpets as they march.

5 They will make one long blast on the trumpets. When you hear that sound, have all the people give a loud shout. Then the walls of the city will fall so the people can go straight into the city.“

God did not tell Joshua to go create a battle plan; He delivered one in perfect detail. His plan is not general and vague, but specific and personal. He wants us to abide with Him so closely that we hear a clear Word from Him about His will for every day and every decision. We should never be afraid to ask God to guide us clearly and powerfully, for that is exactly what He wants to do in our lives.

Proverbs 16:21 “A man’s heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”

Proverbs 3:6 “...in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your steps.”

8. Why do we refuse to do God’s will?

God’s guidance is so wonderful and His power is unlimited, so why do so many believers fail to depend upon Him every day? There are three primary reasons.

1. it takes courage. Even when our faith is strong, we must be brave when we obey God and take our stand against the enemy. (Psalm 27:14)

God told Joshua 3 times “Be strong and courageous”(Joshua 1:2-9).

2. it takes patience. We must learn to wait upon the Lord, and trust in His timing. (Isaiah 40:31)

3. it takes faith. We must learn to walk by faith and not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7)We can have perfect faith that He will never fail us.

9. God will remove every obstacle that hinders His will and plan for your life.

When you make a complete commitment of your will to His, He may provide a test. He may remove something that you feel you must have. Will you have the faith to trust only in Him? Do you really believe that He will remove every obstacle, and that you need nothing else on earth but His presence and power? When we trust Him absolutely and with no reservations, we will see Him act powerfully and miraculously. We will know that with God, there is no obstacle

Psalm 86, Psalm 27:1-5