

# Pastoral REFLECTIONS

January 15, 2023

## Stay in the Game

Life is filled with obstacles, challenges, walls to tear down, and vicious enemies. Most of the time it seems like the Lord is not interested in miraculously removing them quickly from our lives. Instead, the Lord tells us He is using these issues to mature us (James 1:2-4), refine us (1 Peter 1:3-11), and discipline us (Hebrews 12:5-11). He also simply tells us to learn to wait (Isaiah 40:28-31), trusting Him because He is going to work it out for our good (Romans 8:28). None of which most people are interested in hearing or doing. Many times we allow our lives to become so absorbed with how difficult life may seem, that we only pray, instead of praying and obeying God's Word. As we face the challenges in us and before us, we take the "wait" to another level which is doing nothing for God. Instead of growing spiritually, experiencing wisdom, finding God's strength, counting it joy (James 1:2-4), or viewing the issues as God loving us ("... those whom the Lord loves He disciplines..... Hebrews 12:6), we become anxious, sometimes bitter or resentful, angry, and depressed, believing that the Lord does not care about our prayer life, service to Him, or obedience to Him. We diminish ourselves to a routine way of life.

If you take a closer look at the life of Christ, what was actually there to be excited about? He was born poor, His earthly father most likely died when He was still young, His family thought He was crazy, most people only liked Him because of what He did for them (after all the thousands served after the resurrection He only spoke to five hundred; 1 Corinthians 15:6), the spiritual leaders hated Him with a vengeance and He died on an old rugged cross at the age of thirty three. If we had not physically seen Him after the resurrection it would seem like He was defeated; BUT!!!

A man stopped to watch a Little League baseball game. He asked one of the youngsters what the score was. "We're losing 18-0," was the answer. "Well," said the man. "I must say you don't look discouraged." "Discouraged?" the boy said, puzzled. "Why should we be discouraged? We haven't come to bat yet." Citation: Stan Toler; God Has Never Failed Me, but He's Sure Scared Me to Death a Few Times (Honor Books, 1995); submitted by Jerry DeLuca; Montreal West, Quebec, Canada.

No matter what obstacles, challenges, walls to tear down, and vicious enemies we may experience, we will have a turn up to bat if we remain on the field, keep the faith (Hebrews 11:6), and apply ourselves to the game (trials).. If nothing changes in this lifetime, we will grow stronger in our faith and our rewards will be great. This is what Christ did (Philippians 2:6-11) and this is the example He left us (1 Peter 2:21-25). As overcomers He allows us to share His throne forever (Revelation 3:21-22); "He who has an ear, let him hear...."



## UPCOMING Events



**URBAN MISSIONS TEAM—MLK UNITY DAY**  
Join the Urban Missions Team tomorrow for a MLK Unity Day service opportunity for youth and parents at Restoration Community Center at 6320 New York Street Houston, TX 77021. Adults must register at [rcdchouston.org](http://rcdchouston.org) and add children and youth to their registration. Contact Natividad Smith for more information at [nds\\_smith@yahoo.com](mailto:nds_smith@yahoo.com)



**MARRIAGE MINISTRY INTEREST MEETING**  
All married couples, join us after either service today at **10 A.M. in the main sanctuary** or **12:30 P.M. in Life App Classroom #3** For more information on how to become involved in the Marriage Ministry, join us at either meeting Sunday or contact **Sherri and Terry Randle** at [lwfcmarriagemin@gmail.com](mailto:lwfcmarriagemin@gmail.com)



**BE INTENTIONAL CONFERENCE 2023—2/4/23**  
**FEATURING PRISCILLA SHIRER**  
**LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER!**  
The Women of Grace Ministry BE INTENTIONAL Conference will take place Sat., Feb. 4, 2023 9 a.m.—2 p.m. This dynamic Conference will feature praise and worship, vendors, a panel discussion, and our phenomenal sister-in-Christ and featured speaker, **Priscilla Shirer**. Registration is \$50.00. T-shirts are available for pre-order at an additional cost of \$20.00-25.00. For more information visit [www.wogconference.org](http://www.wogconference.org) or Register Now at <https://bit.ly/WOG2023>



**MEN'S MINISTRY FELLOWSHIP**  
The Kingdom Builder's Men's Ministry will have their first fellowship on Jan. 21st. at 9 a.m. All men are welcomed to the Backyard Fellowship. Join us as we discuss the 2023 calendar, goals, and determine how we can better serve as men. **For more information, contact James Thompson at 281-851-6958**



**LWCA PRESCHOOL—\$85 PER WEEK**  
**BEFORE/AFTER CLUBS—\$35-\$55 PER WEEK**  
Would you like your children to learn to be a little more like Jesus? Then, join the Living Word Christian Academy for preschool and before and after school programs and clubs including: robotics, chess, tennis, music, culinary arts, academic enrichment and much more! For more information, call (713) 686-5538 or register at [www.lwcaacademy.org](http://www.lwcaacademy.org)



## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

*Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses*

Special Music

"Victorious"

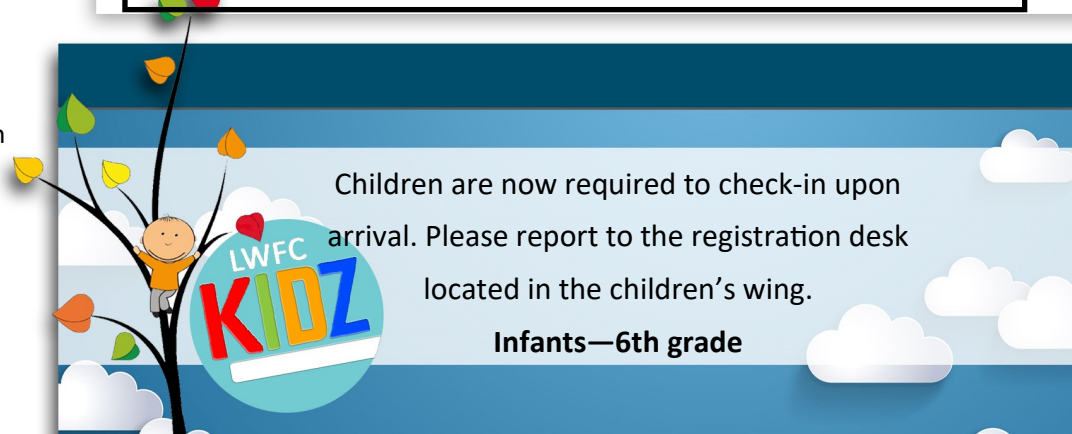
Joshua 6:1-8

Click on the "Resources" tab and click "Sermon Notes"

Call to Discipleship

Please remain seated at this time

Benediction





## Victorious Joshua 6:1-8

### A. Be Careful to Listen (vs. 1-4):

1. It confronts the problem head on:
  - a) All movement in and out of Jericho stopped.
  - b) Israel was near the city walls of Jericho. They spent forty years suffering because they chose to run from an enemy that was afraid of them (Joshua 2:8-11) all because they chose not to listen.
  - c) Israel's history preceded them. All who God preserved are listening.
2. It is seeing through God's eyes:
  - a) The Lord of Host has the authority to make this happen (Joshua 5:13-15).
  - b) Believing in the Lord allows us to see what He will do (Hebrews 11:6).
3. It trust God's promises:
  - a) This is a generous gift from God.
  - b) The Lord provides the ability to accomplish the task.
  - c) God promises Israel that this land is in their power.
4. It overcomes all obstacles no matter how great they may be.
  - a) Jericho's strong prevailing, proven warriors are no match when God fights our battles.
5. It demands obedience because faith without works is dead (James 2:18-24).
  - a) They must condition themselves to walk around in circles.
  - b) They must have a deep commitment to follow His instructions.

### B. Live by Faith, Not by Sight (vs. 4-5; Hebrews 11:6):

1. No one can stop what is going to take.
2. They shout knowing victory is guaranteed.
3. The walls that everyone trusted does not protect them.
4. Victory requires us to keep our eyes fixed on Christ (Hebrews 12:3). Nothing is impossible with God (Matthew 19:26).



## PRAYER REQUESTS

**Grieving:** Jo Lathan & family, Larry Ellis & family, Eleanor Wilson & family, Roy Harrison & family, Shirley Harris & family, Kim Young & family, Mignette Dorsey & family, and Alex Wolfe & family.

**Health and Healing:** Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Barbara Gordon, Eric White, Ella James, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Lakessia Davis, Rutha Patrick, Betty Goode, Latifah Brown, Tanisha Collins, Eric Prichett, Rufus Hadnot, Pat James, Kevin Carey, Lori Lee, Nikisha Doyle, Jessie Austin, Patricia Jackson, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clark, Clara Williams, Donnie Emerson, Denise Seals, Brenda Tillman, Beatrice Williams, Evelyn Harris, Kathleen Franklin, Lynette Mims, Betty Cunningham, and Deborah Smith.

# VICTORIOUS

## JOSHUA 6:1-8