

SERMON: Legacy of Faithfulness, Part 2

GOOD Morning OIC AND WELCOME TO FATHER'S HOUSE

In this Message I will be continuing in the book of Joshua with the title

“Legacy of Faithfulness, Part 2.” My last Message I exegeted or explained the meanings of the Bible on how Joshua **maintained his Legacy of Leadership as a Masterful General and Spiritual Leader of Israel.** I defined his confidence in God as his **Strategic Self-Importance.** I showed Bible verses that also revealed **Jesus Christ's Confidence in His Father God as His Strategic Self-Importance.** The events surrounding this period of Joshua's Life in the Bible were as he approached the age of 110.

JOSHUA'S LEGACY OF FAITHFULNESS

Quoting my last sermon titled *Legacy of Faithfulness Part 1* : The tenor or trend and drama of the events as he approached his appointed by God death were much less intense than Joshua's Calling by God; the Entrance of Joshua into the Promised Land by Crossing Uncross-able Rivers; Knocking down Immovable Walls, and Defeating Un-defeatable Vast Armies.

I will summarize the 4 main themes of Joshua's calling and conquests which painted the picture of Joshua's whole life:

1. Joshua's Calling – my Message - *Life Expands with Courage*, 2025.2.9
2. Crossing Uncross-able Rivers - my Message - *Uncrossable Rivers*, 2025.3.30
3. Knocking down Jericho's Immovable Walls - my Message-*Our Walls Come Tumbling Down*, 2025.4.27
4. Defeating Undefeatable Vast Armies- my Message - *Fighting The Giants*, 2025.5.11

Reading Joshua's exhortation and encouragement to Israel in **(Joshua 23.6-8) 6** “*Now be very strong to observe and enact all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, so that you do not deviate from it to the right or the left. 7 Do not assimilate with these peoples remaining among you.*”

Do not invoke the names of their gods, nor swear by, serve, or worship them. 8 Instead, cling to the LORD your God, as you have done until today.

Joshua never forgot the Lord's first command to him as a young leader placed in the great position to replace Moses! This was years earlier in **(Joshua 1.6-7)** **6** *“Be strong and courageous, for you shall provide the land that I swore to their fathers to give them as an inheritance for this people. 7 Be strong and very courageous, in order to act carefully in accordance with all the law that My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn aside from it to the right or the left, so that you may succeed wherever you go.* In **(Joshua 23.6-8)** he is simply repeating to Israel what God had commanded and taught him in **(Joshua 1.6-7)**.

Joshua remembered his beginnings and calling by the Lord. This allowed his Confidence to be not just a spiritual idea, but strength for each day and each battle and each Victory. The command by God *“Be strong and courageous,”* as even men with faith like Joshua often have their faith and courage falling; and also, *“you shall provide the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.”* Thus God wanted Joshua to know his **Strategic Self-Importance, God's purpose for His life and his natural and supernatural abilities (his unbeatable sword and miracles around him) that Joshua had to chose to trust as He trusted God! Knowing Joshua's heart, God trusted him to say to him, “you shall provide, You shall keep your Promises.”** Joshua's last message to Israel reminded the people of God's faithfulness to keep His promises to them in **(Joshua 23.14)** **14** *“Now, I am going the way of all the earth. You know in all your hearts and souls that not a single word has failed out of all the good things that the LORD your God has said concerning you. All came true for you. Not a single word among them failed.*

It is noteworthy that many anime comics and superhero movies show heroes with powers that actually occurred by God's power in the Older Testament of the Bible. It really happened that “no one can stand before you” in their battles with the Israelites' swords.

GOD'S COMMAND TO HAVE COURAGE FOR CHRISTIANS TODAY

Christians today also need to hear God's command to Joshua for themselves in **(Joshua 1.6-7)** **6** *“Be strong and courageous, for you shall provide the land that I swore to their fathers to give them as an inheritance for this people. 7 Be strong and very courageous, in order to act carefully in accordance with all the law that My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn aside from it to the right or the left, so that you may succeed wherever you go ...and as Joshua later repeated to the Israelites:*

(Joshua 23.6) 6 “*Now be very strong to observe and enact all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, so that you do not deviate from it to the right or the left.*”

However, a Christian's strength and courage does not come from the Law of Moses but from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our *Justification* because we believe in Jesus!

Recalling that the Word of God's defines the word *Justification* from Paul's Letter to the Roman churches: **(Romans 5.1-2)** *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and so we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Referring to my sermon here at OIC on December 3, 2023 in the Book of Romans Chapter 5: I really like J.B. Phillips' translation of **(Romans 5.1-2/JBP):** *Since then it is by faith that we are justified, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have confidently entered into this new relationship of grace, and here we take our stand, in happy certainty of the glorious things he has for us in the future.*

GRASP means: “to lay hold of”, “understand clearly”, “hold on tightly to” the truth of being justified by FAITH. Note the similar command by Joshua in **(Joshua 23.8) 8** *Instead, cling to the LORD your God, as you have done until today.* Also repeating the main theme for Christians in the New Testament in the Bible, “to hold on tightly from FAITH TO FAITH until we see JESUS.”

{Pastor Bruce's Sermon / October 8, 2023 } – I preached that from the exposition of **Romans 1.17** which “also makes it clear that the power of salvation begins its work in a sinner for re-birth then continues in him as a saint, holy one. This power must continue throughout one's life on Earth. God's continuing work in a Born Again Christian is from faith to faith, and the Born Again Christian will also do work, especially in his soul or heart, from faith to faith. But Jesus with us always carries the heavier side of our cross!!!”

CHRISTIAN'S COURAGE – HIS RIGHT STANDING WITH GOD AND GIFT OF HOLY SPIRIT

This laying hold of our Justification, our right standing with God because we believe in Jesus, is the rock or solid ground for us Christians to *be strong and courageous* as Joshua. Joshua's obedience to God created the Legacy he left to his family, his people, and even to us by the Holy Bible.

I call this Joshua's *Strategic Self-Importance*. It is truly a *godly man's confidence*. It depends on God's, not man's, strategy! But God does not deny our being human and holy. We can meditate on (Psalm 139.14/KJ21) *I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.*

In my message *Life Expands with Courage*, 2025.2.9, I applied meanings from Joshua's Call and Command from God in (Joshua 1.6) for courage. Similarly to **Israel's prophet and people in (Haggai 2.5):** *According to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.* God's character has not changed. If the Spirit remained with those Israelites whose hearts kept seeking the Lord, who much more for New Testament Christians. As in (1 John 4.13) *We know that we live in Him, and He in us, because He has given us His Spirit.*

DOES GOD TRUST CHRISTIANS WITH HIS POWER AS HE TRUSTED JOSHUA?

I said of Joshua, “God trusted him!” The first time I heard the words: “God trusts me!” they were spoken by a preacher with powerful gifts of healing. My pastor, standing near him, said “Amen!” Hearing my pastor, a very conservative Christian, agree made me pause and pray about this. **I was afraid to trust myself at all!** I had been a Born-Again Christian about 10 years at that time. But, I could not imagine God **trusting me!** I think that (Isaiah 38.17/AMP) shows where I was about 40 years ago in my pilgrimage to Heaven. It says: *“Indeed, it was for my own well-being that I had such bitterness; But You have loved back my life from the pit of nothingness (destruction), For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.*

It may take years for a Christian to forgive himself, long after God forgave him. **“God trusts me!”** is the godly attitude of accepting your being declared forgiven, and not guilty by God, if not your own conscience!

Believing God trusts you as a Christian is because you trust His plan for your life, His calling you to belong to Him and to serve Him. Then you are free to use the gifts He gave you for His Purposes, thus His Glory. I call this knowing and living out your *Strategic Self-Importance*. It is not based on imagining that you can never sin again or foolishly resist His perfect will for your life. Actually, as a Believer trusts himself only because God trusts him, he lives more fully his Strategic Self-Importance as planned by God. He is less tempted by Satan's lies to intimidate. Satan lies to Christians that they are not really Conquerors over his plans for evil and calamity. A believer can only live this confident yet truly humble way

because he has first trusted in Jesus who redeemed him and justified him and placed him in the position of being acceptable in God's Presence.

In my last Message, **Legacy of Faithfulness, Part 1**, I said, “Joshua knew how he depended on God for all victories. But, he also knew that God's command back in his calling required a confidence in his giftings, and all his God given abilities.” thus **A MAN'S CONFIDENCE**. This is his *Strategic Self-Importance* and it is truly a *godly man's confidence*. **It also means that a man depends on God's, not man's, strategy!** YES God trusts a Christian who is committed to live a life trusting God's power and plans. This is a Christian developing his *Strategic Self-Importance* as Jesus teaches him God's ways.

I found this concept in a sermon by a Lutheran Minister. I showed in my last Message that the Bible supports this as Joshua and Jesus both lived their lives mindful of their Calling, their *Strategic Self-Importance*. **Joshua** was called to conquer Canaan and direct Israel's spiritual life to be focused on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the only True God. **Jesus**, was called, to obey His Heavenly Father unto death on a Cross to purchase forgiveness and everlasting life for all sinners who would believe in Him.

This concept for Christian living was actually the focus of a very popular book and television series by Rev. Rick Warren called *The Purpose Driven Life*. I believe that the Spirit of Jesus inspired this book to confront the materialistic dreams for success and worldly goals in the hearts of many Christians especially in America, the richest country in the world. But, there are many other **idols besides wealth and riches** that **Christians** are tempted to put ahead of God's will for their lives. As I said in my last Message: “Then we can get this Lutheran Minister's point that all Christians, including called Ministers, need a *Strategic Self Importance*. **Every Child of God, not just those called to The Ministry, has a purpose in life.**”

But Pastor Bruce, you may say: Aren't we supposed to be “crucified with Christ.” **Is not self dead?** Truly the Apostle Paul taught this over and over in the New Testament Letters to churches. The Holy Spirit inspired this Word in **(Galatians 2.20)** *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.* **BUT, any one verse in the Bible can create a heresy against true Christianity.** Realize that this verse all alone would be **nihilism**, the belief of Buddhists and those who aim for a Nirvana of non-existence as an individual. God created Man for fellowship with him. **A non-being cannot fellowship with God!** The Apostle Paul's use of

crucified with Christ in (**Galatians 2.20**) means to crucify the self-will when it is against God's will; And, to crucify the desire to sin which is always against Holiness.

WHAT WE LEAVE BEHIND!

As I said my Message *The Legacy of Faithfulness Part I- A LEGACY OF FAITHFULNESS IS THE IMPACT OF OUR LIVES ONLY AFTER WE LEAVE TO HEAVEN AND IS ONLY POSSIBLE BY LIVING OUR STRATEGIC SELF-IMPORTANCE NOW*, and Every Legacy or “lasting impact for good and not evil” begins with...is continued by....and is concluded by God. I also warned of OVER-FOCUSING on one's LEGACY and not *fixing your gaze on JESUS!*

Now, I will give an example of a man from History. He was Japanese. His life illustrates the power that God can show in a sinner's life to transform it by the Cross of Jesus, and, create a life focused on living out God's purpose, that Christian's *Strategic Self-Importance!* Like Joshua, this man showed great courage and boldness throughout his life: first for his Emperor, and then, for His Lord Jesus! This man left a legacy that honored his nation, but even more so, His God! His name is Mitsuo Fuchida.

THE LEGACY OF MITSUO FUCHIDA

Today is the 84th Anniversary of the Japanese Bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. This brought the United States into World War II against the Axis Forces of Germany and Japan.

You may ask me: “**Pastor, why bring up the sad days of death and destruction for the Japanese people?**” Because as Christians, we must never let Death and Destruction remove Jesus from His Throne in Heaven. He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth!

PSALM 97.1 DECLARES BOLDLY OVER ALL EVENTS ON PLANET EARTH:

The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad! I feel the coastlands here are our beloved Japan. Quoting Charles H. Spurgeon (M&E) “**Majesty gleams in flashes of fire amid the tempest's horrors, and the glory of the Lord is seen in grandeur in the fall of empires, and he crash of thrones.**” God Requires Christians to trust Him, and by faith, to see all History in light of Eternity! God does feel with great compassion a pain when disaster hits men, especially our loved ones. C.H. Spurgeon added an 19th Century poem to show this:

*God is God; He sees and hears
All our troubles, all our tears.
Soul, forget not, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all for ever reigns*

The Legacy and life of Fuchida appeared after World War II. The largest war on planet Earth was just beginning. His life was similar to Joshua's in its intense events: his initiating the Attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii to start World War II. This surprise attack was considered impossible; and commitment to obey the Emperor to Defeat what he knew was an Un-defeatable American Army. In a sense, he started the War that became Worldwide. But God saw the Eternity in his heart. This was a hero in Japan who became *God's Samurai*, Mitsuo Fuchida.

Yes, if Japanese Christians need a hero and a legacy, think about Fuchida. He was the best pilot in the Japanese Airforce, part of the Navy for the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. He and his pilot training classmates were chosen by Admiral Yamamoto to lead the attack, and Fuchida had to make the decision to attack only if it were a surprise! His famous words: *Tora, Tora, Tora* (Tiger, Tiger, Tiger) were the code words to the other pilots to attack Pearl Harbor.

You may ask: **Pastor Bruce, how can this be a Christian Legacy?** My answer includes Biblical attitudes of honor. Before Christ entered his heart, Fuchida was acting in honor of his mother country and allegiance to his Emperor. He led the successful attack on Pearl Harbor with many American Navy Ships sunk and many American Soldiers killed. As I taught in a previous sermon, the Bible shows clearly by the words of John the Baptist that killing in war is not murder. This is God's Word. But God was giving Fuchida much more than a war victory. God gave him prevenient grace, or unmerited favor, to miraculously keep him alive to fulfill His being Chosen by God before the foundation of the World. There were many miracles in his life before he found Jesus. One of the most powerful is that after the first A-Bomb on Hiroshima, Colonel Fuchida and other trusted leaders in the Japanese Navy inspected the destroyed city. Within one year they were all dead from nuclear poisoning, except Fuchida. He had no affects at all! This, and other miracles, are in his autobiography, *God's Samurai, From Pearl Harbor to Golgotha*, (FLSB) and others. I will mention just a few of these miracles here. The latest book about him, *Wounded Tiger* (FLSB), by a professional American author is even more powerful. He is pushing for a movie to be produced. This book connects Fuchida's life details with great skill. It especially relates Fuchida's kindness to civilians during the war. He battled like a **tiger** in his Japanese Zero, but, he treated civilians like a **kitten**. Unlike the Japanese Army, the Japanese Navy taught the proper attitude towards civilians according to the *Geneva Convention on War*. Fuchida gladly complied with honor.

In 1942 Fuchida had landed on an island field to start to build a new airstrip to attack the Americans in the South Pacific. There he found a Christian missionary family, the Covells. They dined

together and he warned them to escape before the Japanese Army arrived. They did not! They prayed to God for forgiveness for the soldiers as they were being beheaded. Their daughter escaped. After the war, Fuchida learned from Japanese airmen returning from being prisoners of war that the Covell's daughter was in a San Francisco California Army hospital. She was nursing captured Japanese soldiers back to health! **His heart began to melt towards Christ.**

After the war he was in Tokyo for signing papers regarding the upcoming War Crime Trials! On the street he met an evangelist who gave him a Bible. He took it. In the quiet of his home he thought many things: War between nations is crazy. All my close friends who learned to fly with me are dead. Millions of both Japanese and American soldiers and many Japanese citizens are dead! I learned to admire the Americans who were giving up their lives to crash into the aircraft carrier I had flew from. I wanted to be their friends for their courage..**but I had to kill them!**

Fuchida was experiencing that without Jesus and God's purpose for life it is as King Solomon wrote in **(Ecclesiastes 1.1-3/NLT)** *1 These are the words of the Teacher, King David's son, who ruled in Jerusalem.2 "Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "completely meaningless!"3 What do people get for all their hard work under the sun?*

Fuchida read the Bible and realized that the only Kingdom with real and never ending purpose is the Kingdom of God with the King of Kings, JESUS! He accepted Jesus.

He later approached that evangelist who gave him his Bible and he brought him to Jacob DeShazzer, a missionary and leader of the outreach in Tokyo. DeShazzer had flown in the famous Doolittle Raid, bombing Tokyo with only a dozen planes only as a psychological message that Japan would no longer be a safe place. He was captured by the Japanese and after the War returned to Japan as a missionary.

DeShazzer immediately recognized a true faith in the heart of a Japanese war Hero. This was a diamond from the rubble and destruction in Japan in 1945. But, DeShazzer did not realize that when the war ended, Fuchida and all the military were hated by the Japanese people. They blamed them all for losing the war! It would be years for the truth to be shown how the aggressive fanatical Army Generals deceived the Emperor Hirohito. They hid their brutality in conquests, especially in Korea, from him. Emperor Hirohito was righteously spared any War Crime punishment by General MacArthur. Just before the official surrender, these fanatical Japanese Generals had raided the Emperor's Palace to murder Emperor Hirohito when they learned of his planned national broadcast on the radio. This radio broadcast to the people was to tell them to honorably surrender to the American Invaders.

Nevertheless, Fuchida was a living testimony to salvation for American enemies, and all people everywhere! His legacy gives glory to God and encouragement to Christians to love their enemies, even those who murdered your Mother and Father.

EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A MIRACLE & HAS A STRATEGIC SELF-IMPORTANCE

God's miracle of love captured each Christian's heart as a sinner to believe and follow Jesus. As written on **(Romans 5.8)** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Whatever path of prevenient undeserved favor God displayed to each Christian, we all came to His Son's Cross and Believed! Every Christian, famous or unknown, is known in Heaven and we are all accepted by God in His Beloved Son Jesus as in **(Ephesians 1.6)** *to the praise of the glory of His grace which He graciously bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

Let us all follow Fuchida's example of selfless love against popular opinion in Japan and later in America. He had found the Lord Jesus and began to obey God's call to find his **Strategic Self-Importance**. Actually, at first, Fuchida was hesitant to actually preach Jesus. The ministers from Tokyo including Jake DeShazzer, who had given him a tract and then sold him the Bible that *saved him*, pressed his keeping his religious rebirth a secret matter. This is a very common Japanese trait.

But on April 14th, 1950, they had gathered a crowd in **Osaka for the Fuchida's First Public Testimony**. People mobbed the open street area to hear **the Man who Bombed Pearl Harbor**. Seeing Fuchida's stubborn resistance, one of the ministerial team, Kinichi, said to him, **“Christ said that if you're ashamed of him before men, he'll be ashamed of you before your Father in Heaven. A true samurai maintains unflinching loyalty to his lord. If Christ is now your lord, he has made you his retainer. Your life belongs to Him, now.”** Soon, Fuchida was speaking with great eloquence to the audience. Fuchida exclaimed the love of American Christian soldiers tortured by Japanese in prison who later returned to the Japanese to save them, even Jake DeShazzer and others. And also the martyred Covells' whose daughter was nursing Japanese enemies back to health! And of the God who saved him and by faith in His Son. This faith, he said, is the only way to the harmony Japanese seek!

Soon, he joined with Billy Graham as an evangelist in America. Despite much hatred from Americans, he stayed true to be *God's Samurai* !

Out of the world's rubble, God raises *Sons of God*.

Let Us Pray....(the Cross and your Legacy?)

Holy Communion

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