

PREPARE FOR BATTLE!

SERIES THEME: "Take courage because we have never been this way before"
(3:4)

SERMON THEME: Steps to take in winning your spiritual battles

TODAY'S TEXT: Joshua 5:1-15

Preparations to make before your battle:

I. Know Your Enemy's _____ (v.1)

- > Essential to spiritual victory is to know our standing in Christ
 - The enemies we face are in essence defeated foes
 - Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15

II. _____ Your Life To God (v.2-9)

- > Circumcise your heart by renewing your faith in Christ
 - Trust the Lord by being vulnerable with Him
- > He promises to roll away your past disgrace!

III. Remember God's _____ (v.10)

- > Do not forget your salvation
 - Recount times when God has come through for you

IV. Begin To _____ In The Promised Land (v.11-12)

- > No more slavery in Egypt or wandering in the desert of disobedience
 - Choose God over the old life.

V. _____ Your Commander (v. 13-15)

- > God wants to establish His rule in your life!

A) Joshua's Question

"Are you for us or for our enemies?"

- That seemingly logical question reveals a _____ that can hinder us
- We tend to see the battles we face as our own personal battles

B) The Commander's Reply

"Neither. But as the commander of the Lord's army I have now come."

▶ Who IS this guy??

- > This was a _____ (an appearance of Christ) who reveals God to man
 - see John 1:1, 2, 18
 - A revelation – an apocalypse – of God to Joshua

- > His answer to Joshua's question was:

I'm not here to take your side or anyone's side - I'm here to _____ and take over

▶ We can see two important principles at work for our lives and spiritual warfare:

1. Joshua was not to claim God's allegiance no matter how _____ his cause seemed
 - The need was for Joshua to acknowledge complete submission to God

2. God was reminding Joshua of His personal _____ and powerful _____

- Assurance of God's care and of his infinite supply
- The commander had an army at his disposal!
 - 2 Kings 6:8-17; Matthew 26:52-53; Hebrews 1:14

C) Joshua's Response

Joshua fell facedown ... *"What message does my Lord have for his servant?"*

- > Worship and _____
- > We need to have the same response in our own lives

D) The Commander's Command

"Take off your sandals, this place is holy."

- Removal of sandals was a sign of _____ and respect

- > "Holy ground" calls special attention to what Joshua had just learned and experienced – it is less to do with a geographic _____ than the Lord's presence

CONCLUSION:

There is a great burden lifted from our shoulders when we have an encounter with our commander, the Lord.

- > The battle is His; and he asks us to recommit our lives, humble ourselves and remove our sandals, and trust Him to take care of the rest!

LIFEGROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

OPEN: Who was the most intimidating person you have ever met?

READ Joshua 5:1-15

> What was the circumcision (v.3), Passover (v.10), and new diet (v.12) in preparation for?

> Why did God have the children of Israel wander for 40 years in the wilderness? Was it fair?

(READ Numbers 13:26-33; 14:1-4; 26-34 for some of Israel's important history)

> God promises that Israel will eat its very words (v.28). How does God's discipline relate to their complaints?

> God's discipline does not seem as harsh for his people today, but he still disciplines those he loves. How have you experienced a "wilderness" experience in your life due to believing a negative report about God?

BACK TO Joshua 5:13-15

> What does the divine Commander want from Joshua? Why? What could be the effects of Joshua not responding well?

> What did the Commander mean by saying "neither"? Was he neutral?

> What is meant by "take off your sandals"?

> Are there times when we should take off our "sandals"? Where or when have those times been?

Focus on your feet. Is this a "holy ground" moment? If you have heard from the Lord about how the battle belongs to Him, and if you are ready to put him first in a battle you're fighting, slip off your shoes ...

PRAY that each one in your group would learn to trust that God is fighting for you as you refocus and recommit your life to him. Pray for any battles your group is facing.