




**“Ye Have Not Passed
This Way Before”
Joshua 3:1-5**



At This Point In History, God's Chosen People Had Gone Through a Lot!

- ▶ They had endured the severe bondage in Egypt and all of the trials, ultimately to escape, actually growing rather than decreasing in strength (Romans 5:3-5, says we do too)
- ▶ They had marched forth to the great Red Sea, with their enemies chasing them, with no way of escape, but God delivered them by dividing the waters, thus making a path for His people (the challenge of following God's guidance, with cloud and fire, Exodus 13 and 14)

Sometimes faith in God requires being thrown in and "feeling the heat" Daniel chapter 3



But as They Traveled Further, They Ran Into More Problems!

- In the wilderness they found no water
- At a place called “Marah,” they hit starvation
- At a place called Rephidim, they thirsted again, and God gave them water from a smitten rock
- They continued to go through so many suffering experiences of illness, droughts, starvation, which all seemingly would be answered by God’s mercies and privileges
- You would think that with so many trials already experienced, their future would be a repetition of similar events that happened to them in the past



However This Was Not The Case!

- ▶ When they arrived at the great Jordan River, with the banks of the river swollen at this time of year, Joshua, who had led them through many dangers, toils, and snares, has assessed this difficult situation and said to them to be careful for: *“You have not passed this way before.”*
- ▶ Therefore, there was to be a solemn and reverent preparation of the children of God before they crossed over into the land of Canaan (the promised land)

God Gave Them Specific Instruction To Cross Into Canaan(the promised land)

- ▶ In verse 5 he says to “Sanctify Yourselves” or Consecrate your lives (*This is not the time to cut up!*)
- ▶ The priest, with a symbol of God’s presence, the ark of the covenant, would step in the Great Jordan River first; and as soon as their feet touched the water, it divided the water for the whole nation to pass through.
- ▶ There was anticipation of the beautiful promise recorded in Isaiah 43:2
“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.”





What Is Their Similarity With Us As Children Of God?

- We are traveling on a “*journey through life,*” but the future is hidden from our eyes
- It’s like traveling, having to cross valleys with questionable depths and mountains with extreme heights
- Storms may be gathering behind the mountains, and our vision is very limited
- What “*Jordans*” we have to cross, we do not know
- But we do have an Ark of the Covenant:
THE PRESENCE OF JESUS! Matthew 28:20



Observations

- ▶ Every church is made up of people with emotions, feelings, and issues, which produce actions, no two of which are exactly alike
- ▶ Trials, temptations, losses, disappointments, and sufferings are allowed to happen to all of us at different times and to different degrees in our lives (*all have disappointments, but not the same*)
- ▶ The times of the disappointments, conditions surrounding them, how old we are, the relationships affected, how long they last, are all different
- ▶ Some of us, at certain points in our lives, seem comparatively free from trials, while others of us seem to have been burdened with difficulty from day one



Observations

- Over the last 5 months, this congregation has had to deal with one lost loved one after another
- Even though there is some resemblance in relationships, there is much diversity.

As a Church, God has Given Us One Another, For Consolation In Times Of Grief!

- We are told to: *“Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep” (don’t disappear) Romans 12:15*



We Have The Presence Of Jesus In Our Church Family!

***“Praise be to God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion,
and the God of all comfort,
who comforts us in all our troubles, so that
we can comfort those in any trouble,
with the comfort we ourselves receive
from God.”***

2 Corinthians 2:3-4



Finally, We Can Add To Our New Experiences The New Idea Of Our Own Death!

- We have not passed this way before
- We have to “*cross our Jordan,*” not in a company of others, like the company of Israelites, **BUT ALONE**
- The presence of others, the sympathy of others, and love of our relationships can only reach to a point, where the unknown begins
- When an individual’s soul separates from his/her body, no one can accompany him/her



But The Ark of Our Covenant, Jesus, Has Gone Down Before US!

- ▶ Jesus stepped into death, our Jordan, for a reason

*“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is the devil”—
Hebrews 2:14*



- ▶ So as we contemplate our own finality with the passing of so many of our loved ones, there is something that we must do like the Children of Israel, God’s people in the Old Testament were told to do



“Sanctify Ourselves”

- **We must consecrate, or separate ourselves, from a selfish life to a Godly life, Hebrews 12:1-2**

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us



***.... Looking unto Jesus the author
and finisher of our faith; who for the
joy that was set before Him endured
the cross, despising the shame, and
is set down at the right hand of the
throne of God***



Death is Swallowed Up By a Triumphant Life!

1 Corinthians 15:53-55

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”



The Plan Of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38

